

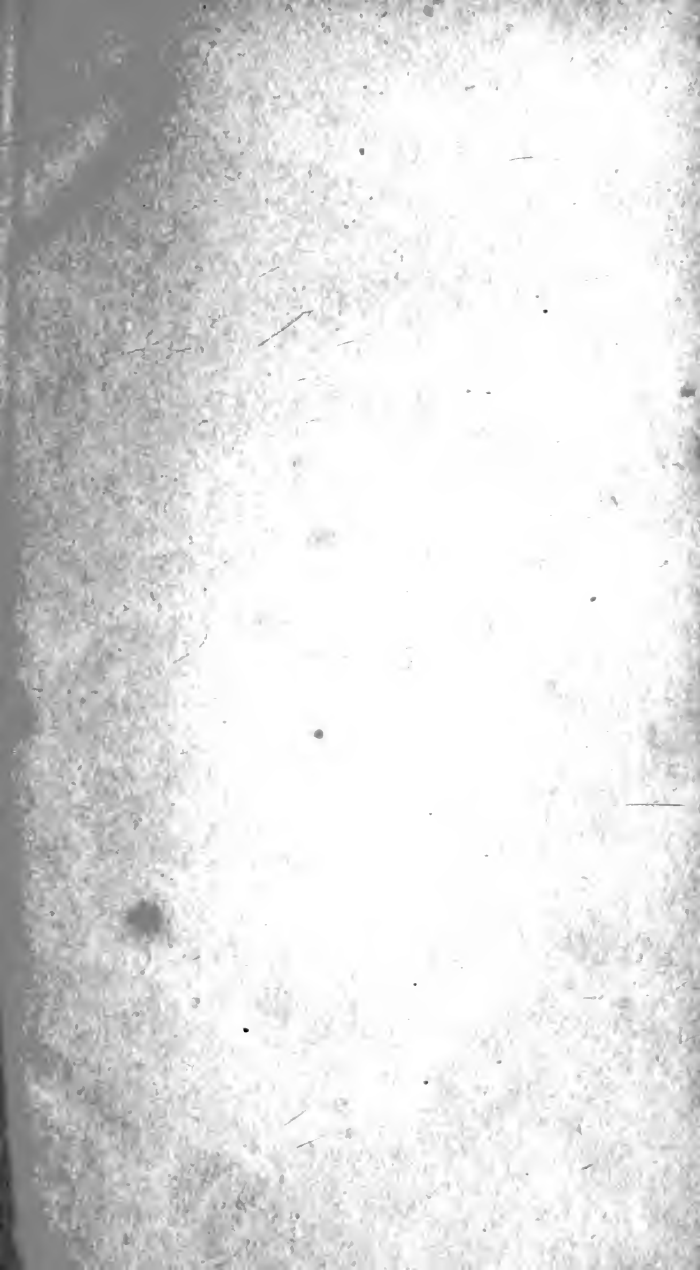


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VIRGINIA ;

OR THE

PEACE OF AMIENS.



VOL. I.

THE

OF THE

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THE

VIRGINIA;
OR THE
PEACE OF AMIENS.

A NOVEL.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

BY MISS EMMA PARKER,

AUTHOR OF ELFRIDA, HEIRESS OF BELGROVE.

VOL. I.

"Peace once more hover'd o'er a weary world,
"Yet smiled she not, but half reluctant shed
"Her balmy influence, while martial sounds
"In distant murmurs rung, receding slow,
"And dubious of return."

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR B. CROSBY AND CO.
STATIONERS'-COURT, LUDGATE-HILL.

1811.

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VIRGINIA

OF THE

THE LIFE OF A MINE

A NOVEL

IN THREE VOLUMES

BY MISS MARY WALKER

RECTOR OF THE LONDON UNIVERSITY OF MINING

VOL. I.

"I have been reading your book, and I find it very interesting. It is a very good book, and I think it will be very useful to many people. I have been reading it, and I find it very interesting. It is a very good book, and I think it will be very useful to many people. I have been reading it, and I find it very interesting. It is a very good book, and I think it will be very useful to many people."

STATIONERS' HALL, LONDON

1840

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v. 1

PREFACE.

I SHALL endeavour in as few words as is possible, to prepare the Reader, as far as I think requisite, for the following Work; being aware that most people have an aversion to a long Preface; nor, in this case, is it necessary.

I do not know if I have acted judiciously in affixing a digressive Chapter to every Volume, thereby following, in some measure, the example of Fielding, (in his most popular work) who gives us so many good reasons for it, that I cannot entirely reject them, though others may; I have therefore only introduced one, where he presents us with four, or five; that is, in the course of each volume.

I would not be understood by this to place my humble attempts in compa-

rison with those most choice blossoms of his rich and luxuriant genius, improved by solid cultivation, and perfected by the experience of age; but I offer them as the unstudied ebullitions of a wild imagination. And as they do not merit the sober name of Essays (though I am compelled sometimes to distinguish them by that term) I shall simply call them Preludes, as that is a mere flourish, unconnected with the piece about to be performed,—a wild rattle of unpremeditated notes, calculated to give some idea

of the execution, and set off what follows; and on all these accounts particularly applicable.

PRELUDE

TO

VOLUME THE FIRST.



I WISH I had never happened to light on the tiresome Italian proverb, "*Che ben comincia ha la meta di l'opra*,"* it carries with it such an imposing command; upon the utmost exertions of one's pen at the very first onset,

* "Who begins well, has done half the work;" or
"What is well begun, is full half done."

that the apprehensions of failure almost annihilates its active powers. To this perhaps will be imputed the heaviness, which in my humble opinion (though I sincerely hope the reader will not agree in it), pervades the two or three first chapters of my narrative; *I think* it extends no farther. But of the excuse offered by the effects of the proverb, I shall not avail myself; but whisper the simple fact, which has been the occasion of paralyzing the energy of the style, or rather of the story in its earliest stage.

On a revisal of the work, I resolved on omitting a very principal scene, which gave animation to the dulness that always prevails at the opening of a story, but I perceived in it some slight traits of cha-

racter so strongly resembling individuals of whom I have some knowledge, and which, without being sensible of it, I appeared to have struck off, that I instantly resolved on leaving out the whole scene.

On re-perusing it attentively, I thought it bore an analogy that would not fail to be interpreted very differently to what I intended it, and might hurt the feelings of some, and cause enmity in others, who were in fact objects of indifference to me, and whom I never had the most distant idea of really representing.

I have, therefore, without hesitation, sacrificed one of the best scenes in my

book, from an apprehension that a wrong construction might have been put upon it, not yet having attained that degree of perfection which would lead me to say with Madame de Stael—" *Moquons nous des autres, et qu'ils se moquent de nous, c'est bien fait de tout part.*"

Having said thus much to prejudice the Reader *against* the first part of my book, I shall only add that I *hope* I have failed in the attempt, and that this work may remind him of the declamation, he no doubt has frequently heard from the pulpit, when the preacher begins in a low tone, scarcely audible, which he elevates by degrees, till he displays the full force of his oratorical powers.

Some indulgence I think will be

shewn—but I hate *indulgence*; it implies a great deal to overlook; I like *justice* better, *that* seems to admit merit. Yet I think the world, that is the *British* World, will feel inclined to shew indulgence to what the *Greek* world considered as unpardonable, and that my candidly acknowledging I follow the example first set by Simonides,* will rather interest the Public in my favor, when I add, that although his exertions were stimulated by a similar view, the motive which instigated him, was widely different, and well merited the severe censure of Aristotle, who termed it “avaricious rapacity;”

* A poet of the Isle of Ceos, and the first on record who wrote for emolument. He was born 558 before our Saviour, and lived ninety years.

and so it was in the companion and favorite of princes and grandees.

His only apology for it was (by his own confession) that as his avarice increased with his years, the pursuit of money was the only delight which time had left him.

I have neither the excuse of years, nor any extraordinary delight which I experience from the possession of money to urge in my extenuation; but perhaps a better apology will be found in the certainty, that with our years, our wants must increase; and money alone can furnish the delights of independence.

This is, alas ! a truism which the most

enlightened are unable to contradict, however the *refinement* of their natures forbids their making any allusions to so *vulgar* a subject.

And now having made this sacrifice to candour, I will add yet another, and catching a glance at that brilliant beam that fluctuates in perspective, and with irresistible influence attracts me forward, in the perhaps vain hope, that its gilded rays, may at length play upon me, exclaim—

“I own I labour for the voice of praise!”

“For who would sink in dark oblivion’s stream;

“Who would not live in songs of other days?”

I hope the reader will not feel inclined to liken me to Erostratus (the circumstance is often alluded to) to set fire to the temple of Diana at Ephesus, in order to immor-

talize his name, and of course will be ever remembered for his mischievous folly and absurdity. Such *immortality* I covet not, and hope nobody will be disposed to think I have a claim to it. It were better to exist "the living lumber of one's kindred earth," and die, unsung, and unremembered!

After what I have said it will be immediately perceived that among "the well-known division of authors into writers for fame! writers for gain! and writers for *both*!" I rank myself in the *latter*, and I believe by far the most numerous class, if *all* would but make *truth* their motto!

VIRGINIA;

OR THE

PEACE OF AMIENS.

CHAP. I.

“ O Solitude ! where are the charms

“ Which sages have seen in thy face ?

“ Better dwell in the midst of alarms,

“ Than reign in this horrible place !

“ Society, Friendship, and Love,

“ Divinely bestow'd upon man ;

“ O had I the wings of a dove,

“ How soon would I taste you again !”

COWPER.

CHARLES CLIFFORD was the only child of a wealthy and respectable British merchant. No pains, or expence, had been spared on his education, which had been conducted in a style suitable to any nobleman, and to which his lively abilities

and celerity of comprehension did ample justice; and the rich and improved fruits of cultivation, were conspicuous both in his mind and manners. He had (what the world calls) NO CONNECTIONS, that is, no relations whose rank or consequence could reflect a tinsel glare on him; nor did he require this borrowed lustre to render apparent his many amiable qualities, and the genuine goodness of heart, which secured him friends, and created him connections in all who knew how to appreciate such perfections. But we do not mean to represent him as a *perfect* being, far from it; there were shades in his character which discovered him to be *human*, though none that could disgrace humanity.

He had been some time at college, and had resisted tolerably well, the various temptations which presented themselves, to induce him to neglect those studies he had repaired to the university to prose-

cute, when death deprived him of his only parent: his mother had died during his infancy. At this period, Charles Clifford had just attained his twentieth year; but his father had so willed it, that *five* years more were to elapse before he became of age, and obtained unrestrained possession of the very considerable funded property he was sole heir to; till which time he was to be under the controul of guardians. In the nomination of the persons who were to act in that capacity, his father had arranged an extraordinary compromise between prudence and ostentation. With due regard to the former, he had (as one of the guardians of his son) selected an elderly country gentleman, who had once been eminent in the law, whose strict economy and sound probity, were almost proverbial in the neighbourhood where he dwelt; the latter proving to a demonstration the injustice of the *general* censure cast on men of his profession. This

gentleman's name was Beryl; he resided with an only daughter, in a small, but neat house, situated in the outskirts of an inconsiderable town, two hundred miles north of the metropolis. The second guardian was of a character and description very opposite to the person above delineated.

Ostentation alone could have prompted Mr. Clifford to request Lord Calisbrook to permit himself to be nominated one of the guardians of his son. That his lordship would perform any one of the duties incumbent on him in that situation, Mr. Clifford never expected; for *that* he wholly depended on Mr. Beryl; being certain Lord Calisbrook would not take any trouble whatever about it, as that was more than he ever did respecting his own affairs. But Mr. Clifford believed he would be a passive agent, and through him his son would get introduced into the first circles, as his vaca-

tions were to be spent alternately with either guardian. Mr. Clifford's connection with Lord Calisbrook had originated in a pecuniary embarrassment of the latter during his father's life-time, when Mr. Clifford had accommodated him with money at legal interest, for which his noble friend professed himself greatly obliged. On his coming to the title (which he had now been in possession of some years) the debt had been paid off, and his lordship had ever since conducted himself with great civility towards Mr. Clifford, whenever they chanced to meet, which however was but seldom, as they moved not in the same circle of society. Lord Calisbrook lived in a style of magnificent splendor; Mr. Clifford, conceived him, at that time, entirely free from all pecuniary difficulties; and was much gratified by the readiness with which his lordship acceded to his request, that he would accept the joint guardianship of his son.

These arrangements had been made some years previous to the death of Mr. Clifford, and when that awful period arrived, he resigned his existence with calmness and composure; feeling perfectly satisfied concerning the future welfare of his son, whose property he knew would be secure in the charge of Mr. Beryl, and whose consequence, he doubted not, would be increased by his connection with Lord Calisbrook.

Charles Clifford had nearly recovered the sincere sorrow he had experienced on the death of his father, when the summer vacation permitted him to absent himself for some time from Oxford.

During his father's life-time, these periods had rarely been spent at home, for Charles had made so many friends for himself, among his fellow collegians, (who always eagerly solicited him to pass

the time with them at the houses of their respective relations), that after remaining a few days with his father, the old gentleman with pleasure allowed him to depart for the residence of some of his *great* friends; for of *such* his acquaintance chiefly consisted; and his father was desirous that he should cultivate and mature these intimacies.

In these circles Charles felt quite at home; indeed they were such as he had been accustomed to from childhood; for his education had been carried on at the most superior seminaries, through every stage; and though, as we before observed, he had *no connections*, (that is no natural ones) his father had lived in a very genteel, nay elegant style; notwithstanding that his town mansion was situated in Bloomsbury Square; which we certainly must admit was considerably too far *eastward* to allow its master any pretensions to *haut ton*. On which ac-

count young Clifford resolved never to inhabit it, he being (as was natural at his age, and with his ideas) most violently prepossessed in favor of every thing that was fashionable, elegant, and genteel, while he entertained a proportionable antipathy to low breeding, ignorance, and vulgarity. He was charmed at the thoughts of being domesticated in the family of Lord Calisbrook; but felt a strong disgust at the idea of visiting Mr. Beryl, at whose residence it had been settled he was to spend his first vacation; owing to which, he was obliged to decline the pressing invitations of his young friends to pass some time with them, which he did with great reluctance; but Mr. Beryl had given him to understand he should expect him to continue with him during the whole vacation, and Charles did not attempt to dispute his will.

With a heavy heart he left Oxford,

heartily wishing that the time were arrived when he should again return to it. He travelled post, attended only by his valet, and whenever the masters of the inns told him it was necessary to have *four* horses on account of some particular hill, or uncommon heaviness of the road, he ordered a pair of leaders to be put on; not from any wish to expedite his journey (being no way impatient to reach the termination of it) but he was so absolutely indifferent on the subject, notwithstanding the augmented expense that would fall upon himself, that he never thought of dissenting; on which account he travelled with four horses nearly the whole way, and about noon the third day the carriage stopped before the house of Mr. Beryl.

The old gentleman (who was in expectation of his guest) was walking up and down a small lawn before his door. He wore a rusty black coat, had no hat on,

and his head was but thinly scattered with grey hairs. His features were prominent, and the lines of his countenance contracted; nor did they relax into a smile on his perceiving Mr. Clifford; but he walked forward with a steady pace as the youth descended from the chaise.

“Charles Clifford, I presume?” said he, as he held out his hand to him. “You are welcome.”

Charles bowed, and followed the old gentleman, who led the way in silence to the house. Having reached a small parlour of no very prepossessing appearance, (there being no carpet on it, and a few oak chairs and a table of the same, forming the whole furniture of the room) he requested Charles to be seated, at the same moment he sat down himself, and continued scanning the youth from head to foot. Clifford, though invited, did

not seat himself, but walked to the window, and looked with some anxiety at his servant, who was taking the baggage off the chaise, and putting it down near the gate, being at a loss to know where to deposit it, for no domestic of any description had come to the door.

Mr. Beryl's continued silence deterred Charles from speaking, but he beckoned to his servant to bring the luggage into the house.

"Did you want any thing?" said Mr. Beryl, observing his motions.

"I believe my servant wishes to know where he is to place my trunk, Sir."

"Well, you can go up stairs and shew him yourself; the first door on the right hand opens into your chamber."

Charles, with a sensation of disgust, not unmixed with resentment at the cavalier manner in which he was treated, went

to *hunt* out his chamber, and following the direction he had received, he soon found it. It was small, but very neat; a single bed with a canopy and white hangings, and a window curtain of the same, gave a lively aspect to the apartment. The floor was covered with green baize, and a delicate napkin supplied the place of a toilet. The looking glass was about one quarter the size of that Charles had been accustomed to survey himself in, but he could see his head in it, and that was quite sufficient, as he experienced no very great degree of pleasure in contemplating his own person; nevertheless it was a very agreeable one. I have been extremely negligent, in not treating on this *important* subject before. Charles Clifford was about the middle height, he certainly could not be called tall, nor could he with any greater degree of propriety be termed short. A juster idea of symmetry and proportion than his figure conveyed, could not be conceived. His

countenance was remarkable for its animation, and had naturally a lively cast. His bright blue eyes darted their meaning before he could give it utterance. The ruddy tint of health pervaded his complexion. His nose was of the nondescript order, but rather long: his teeth white, and his bright chesnut *Brutus* set remarkably well, and gave expression to his whole contour.

Charles lingered some time in his chamber, feeling averse to rejoining Mr. Beryl, of whose manners and disposition he had formed the most unfavorable opinion. He had never seen him before, but had frequently heard his father mention him as his particular friend; but as he had been ignorant of his intention to nominate him one of his guardians, he had never inquired particularly concerning him. He knew that he had a daughter, but the old gentleman had appeared so reserved and inaccessible, that Charles

had not ventured to enquire after her, at his first entrance. He now again descended, and found Mr. Beryl just where he had left him; but he was engaged with a book, which he did not lay down when Charles re-entered. The youth seated himself in the window, and endeavoured to seem occupied in contemplating the prospect, which was really picturesque; for although the house was close to the town, no vestige of it could be discerned from the windows, and it would have been easy to have fancied oneself in the bosom of the country.

The exterior of the residence was prepossessing; it had the appearance of a *cottage orné*, but with that the parlour Charles now sat in, by no means corresponded.

Mr. Beryl at length put down his book, and taking out a shabby looking silver watch with a steel chain, he said, "Just

an hour to dinner time. Dinner will be on the table exactly at *two*."

Charles could scarcely forbear casting up his eyes in amazement. Mr. Beryl added;—

"I will not ask you to take any thing, as dinner will be ready so soon."

Charles only bowed. He no longer regretted that the meal was to be served at so *gothic* an hour, for he had breakfasted early, and was very hungry, and would have relished extremely a substantial luncheon, which he had always been accustomed to. Mr. Beryl now said, "You may go and walk round the grounds if you like it. They are not very extensive, you cannot lose yourself."

Charles, glad to quit his presence, availed himself of this *gracious* permission, and proceeded to the lawn, from

whence he strolled into a shrubbery, which though of no very great extent, was shady and agreeable. Several rustic seats presented themselves, and the utmost order and regularity was conspicuous in all around. Having reached the termination, his progress was impeded by a small wicket which conducted into a hanging wood, but the gate was locked, and Charles retraced his way through the shrubbery, but did not re-enter the house until the hour of dinner, which was served in the only sitting room he had yet seen. A roast leg of mutton, potatoes, and a cucumber were put on the table. Not another dish of any description appeared. Mr. Beryl, without the least ceremony, bade Charles dress the cucumber. A dumb waiter was drawn close to the table; for a female servant, who had brought in the dinner, left the room the moment she had placed the dishes.

“ I suppose you cannot dine off one joint?” said Mr. Beryl, as he cut the mutton.

Charles replied, that he had a very good appetite.

“ Did you ever sit down to such a dinner before?” asked Mr. Beryl.

Charles was at a loss how to answer ; he never recollected having partaken of so frugal a repast in his life, but he did not like to say so, and he observed that the mutton appeared extremely good ; adding that he doubted not he should make an excellent dinner.

“ A prevaricator, I perceive,” said Beryl. “ I suppose a modern *fine* gentleman must not tell the truth.”

“ I have no pretensions to being a *fine* gentleman, Sir.”

“Indeed! I should not have supposed so from the style in which you travelled here.”

“Style! Sir?” repeated Charles with an interrogating glance.

“Yes, *style*, Sir!” echoed the old gentleman; “perhaps you don’t consider a post chaise and *four style*; but *I* do, and very unnecessary style too. I should have thought a *pair* of horses would have been quite sufficient to have drawn you and your servant; I don’t perceive that either of you are so remarkably unweildy. I can’t say I should have been much surprised if you had travelled down in the mail coach.”

“Really, Sir, I never thought of the mail coach; it certainly would have been the best way; and indeed it was not my desire to have four horses, but the inn keepers assured me it was absolutely necessary on account of the heaviness of the roads.”

“The *inn keepers* assured you! Why.

how could you for a moment believe a word that *they* said? Your own senses might have informed you that they were only consulting their own interest. The money you have expended on this journey might have been much better appropriated; a repetition of such acts of extravagance would soon involve you in difficulties."

Charles could scarcely forbear smiling. After a short silence, he ventured to ask after Miss Beryl.

"She was very well yesterday," replied the old gentleman, "when I heard from her; she has been staying with some friends in the country, but I expect her home to-morrow."

Charles was very glad to hear this, as he hoped in Miss Beryl to find a more congenial being than her father. They had not concluded their meal, when a

poor woman, with an infant in her arms, (trailing another, that could scarcely walk, after her by the hand) approached the window begging for charity.

Charles, with the warmth of heart natural to him, instantly put his hand into his pocket, and arose with the intention of bestowing his pittance on the suppliant, for she appeared out of health, and spoke in the most humble tone. But the moment Mr. Beryl perceived her, he flew to the window, and threw it up; and with a countenance of anger, he addressed the harshest language to the unfortunate; asking her how she dare to enter his gate, and commanding her instantly to depart, or he would commit her to Bridewell. The poor woman was struck dumb, she only courtesied with a piteous look. Mr. Beryl became more furious, and threatened to set his dogs at her; she then, trembling with terror, withdrew from the window.

Charles looked after her with the utmost commiseration, and ventured to say—"Pray, Sir, allow me to—"

Mr. Beryl interrupted him, crying out—"She shall not have a single farthing! If you attempt to give her any thing, I shall be extremely offended with you, Sir."

Charles, more disgusted than ever with Mr. Beryl, reluctantly returned his purse into his pocket, for the poor woman was now at some distance, and he did not wish to exasperate his morose companion, by following, or calling after her; but he determined at the first opportunity to go into the town, in the hope that he might meet her, and bestow that relief she appeared so much in want of.

He could not eat another morsel, and remained totally silent, while Mr. Beryl continued to descant, with more volu-

bility than he had before discovered, upon the impositions constantly practiced by beggars, and the folly and absurdity of listening to their tales, or throwing away money on such unworthy objects.

Some currant wine was put on the table after dinner; Charles had not been accustomed to such light beverage, and having drank one glass of it, he declined taking any more.

“Well,” said Mr. Beryl, “if you don’t choose to drink, it is no use our sitting here wasting time; for you do not seem disposed for social converse; so you may amuse yourself as you please till six o’clock, when tea will be ready. I have plenty to occupy my time. I suppose you never read except when you are obliged; it is not the fashion now-a-days. But, however, if you should be less *fashionable* than I suspect you to be, those pannels round the room are all slid-

ing boards, and the recesses behind them contain a tolerable library, which you may benefit by if you choose."

With these words he quitted the room, leaving Charles astonished at his allusion to *social converse*, the nature of which he appeared so little to understand.

The poor beggar now recurred to his thoughts, and with her, a sensation nearly bordering on abhorrence of Mr. Beryl.

He took up his hat, and soon found himself in the town, which he traversed in every direction, hoping to meet the being who had so much interested his feelings. But his search proved fruitless, and he returned to the house no less disgusted with the dreary and deserted aspect of the streets he had passed through than with the owner of the little mansion.

Now the town in itself was by no means an ugly, or a dirty town; and was as populous as most places remote from the metropolis, where no manufacture is established, or which is not a garrison; but Charles had been accustomed to reside in a grand, nay magnificent city; where he seldom traversed half a street without meeting some acquaintance. In his walk this evening he had not met one person whose appearance bespoke gentility, nor beheld one face he had ever seen before; he thought the little town of P—the most horrible place he had ever been in; he hated every body, and every thing he saw, wondered how any person could exist there; and on his return to the house, he, with some impatience, pushed back the slides of the library, hoping to find something there that would assist in helping off the miserable time he should be condemned to remain with Mr. Beryl. He examined two cases full of books without finding

any but such as treated on religion and law; he had not patience to pursue the search any farther, not doubting they were all works on similar subjects; and completely out of humour, he went up to his chamber, and unpacking his writing desk, he commenced a most desponding epistle to one of his college friends, very pathetically describing the horrors of his situation, and descanting on it in language which might well have suited an Exile in Siberia.

CHAP. II.

—

“To bless mankind with tides of flowing wealth,
“With pow’r to grace them, or to crown with health,
“Our little lot denies—but Heav’n decrees;
“To all the gift of ministering ease.
“The gentle offices of patient love,
“Beyond all flattery, and all price above,
“The mild forbearance of another’s fault;
“The taunting word suppress’d as soon as thought;
“On these Heav’n bids the bliss of life depend,
“And crush’d ill fortune, where it made a friend!”

CHARLES was interrupted in the middle of his epistolary lamentations by a summons to tea. Still the little uncarpeted parlour, or rather the library (for such in fact it was) was the scene of action, and he began to think there was no other sitting room in the house. He made a tolerable good meal at his tea, for it was his usual dinner hour, and the

brown bread and butter suffered accordingly. Mr. Beryl observed that Charles had a very good appetite; but whether he was pleased or displeased at the discovery, it was not easy to determine from his manner; at all events Charles had as leave the observation had not been made; however, he resolved not to eat the less for it.

Mr. Beryl now said, "I suppose you have been reading, for I perceive the cases are open."

"No, Sir, I was only looking over the books."

"What, I suppose there are none sufficiently profound to suit you?—But you opened the wrong part. Had you began at this end you would have found something more to your taste. The books on these shelves are all in their original languages; Greek, Hebrew, Syriac, Chaldean, Sanscrit; those I dare say will better suit your taste and capacity; but,

however, when next you examine them, I should be glad you would close the slides after you, for the dust gets in and ruins my books."

Shortly after the tea things were removed, Charles rose, resolving to go and finish his letter, for he found himself unable to make a single attempt to converse with Mr. Beryl, who said to him as he quitted the room, "Supper at nine;" and not till *nine* did Charles re-appear.

The supper consisted of bread and cheese, butter, sallad and radishes; no meat of any kind was to be seen, and the only beverage was table beer. As early as he could without absolute rudeness, Charles retired, and the most pleasing sensation he experienced during the day, was occasioned by the sight of his valet in his chamber, when he went up to bed; for in him he beheld some one he was accustomed to, and for whom

he felt greater interest than for any body he had yet seen at P—. It was many hours earlier than Charles had been in the habit of retiring to rest, but he was in that temper of mind which peculiarly inclines one to court sleep, as a refuge from *ennui* and discontent. By six o'clock in the morning he awoke again under the same impression; looking forward to the coming day with the most comfortless and desolate sensation. He rose and dressed himself without the assistance of his servant, thinking it too early to arouse him, for (like most young men) he indulged him to a ridiculous degree.

Charles descended the stairs, intending to take a walk before breakfast. He found that the servants were up, and every thing below appeared as if it was later than he imagined, but a clock on the stairs (the hand of which pointed to half-past six) convinced him he was not

mistaken. In passing the parlour door, he thought of what Mr. Beryl had said respecting the books; by the cast of his countenance at the time he had spoken, he was pretty certain that he rather meant to deride his capacity than to pay him a compliment, by affecting to think that he required books of extraordinary profundity to interest him. He now determined to examine the shelves he had pointed to, as containing various productions in the dead languages; but how greatly was he surprized to find the books here arranged, were the works of the most modern English authors, both in prose and verse; and magazines, reviews, and pamphlets, of the latest date, were heaped together. Charles was delighted: He soon selected a companion for his walk; but upon consideration he felt a still increased dislike to Mr. Beryl, as it was now very evident that what he had said the night before was a sarcasm upon him,

and plainly denoted the very humble opinion he entertained of his erudition.

“O! what a disagreeable old man this is!” thought Charles; “not only austere, and hard-hearted, but sarcastic; and that is scarcely less disgusting than the other two bad qualities.”

He soon ceased to think of the disagreeable old man, and every thing else disagreeable, for the charms of the volume he had selected absorbed all his ideas.

He placed himself on one of the seats in the shrubbery, and there remained till he was surprised by his servant, whom Mr. Beryl had sent in search of him, and to call him to breakfast, which was always ready at eight o'clock.

Mr. Beryl had begun, when Charles joined him.

“ Well, Sir,” said he, as Charles entered the room, “ I am surprised to hear you were up so early!—I suppose you cannot sleep upon any thing but a down bed, with four mattresses under it!”

“ I slept very well, Sir; but as I went to bed so early, it is not likely I should sleep late this morning.”

Charles now felt quite provoked with Mr. Beryl, who he believed was ridiculing him, and he could scarcely answer him with common patience.

“ What has been the subject of your studies?” said Mr. Beryl, taking up the book Charles had been reading, then added, “ O, ho! I see you have resorted to the books I recommended to you.”

Charles coloured, and looked very serious, while his tormentor seemed more inclined to smile than he had been since the youth's arrival. Charles observed

the expression of his countenance, and felt more indignant than ever, and with difficulty could he restrain himself from saying something that would have been unbecoming in him to a man of Mr. Beryl's years; but he compelled himself to continue silent, which he did during the remainder of the time spent at breakfast; and as soon as he had finished, he took up his book, and began reading without any ceremony.

“ You appear extremely interested in that book,” said Mr. Beryl, who seemed to take a pleasure in forcing Charles to speak when he was least inclined. The latter with reluctance obliged himself to say,—“ It is very entertaining.”

“ And that is more than you think your companion,” said Mr. Beryl, laughing, for the first time in Charles's presence; for in proportion as the ill humour of the latter betrayed itself, the moroseness of

the former relaxed. Charles neither contradicted nor assented to Mr. Beryl's last observation, who immediately said, "Silence gives consent;" and with these words he left the room without any appearance of displeasure. Charles thought him the most unpleasant man he had ever beheld; as even his good humour (seemed to him) purposely ill-timed, and put on, as if merely out of opposition.

Charles continued reading without any interruption till about noon; when an elegant equipage stopped before the gate; from which descended two ladies, and two gentlemen. The appearance of each was prepossessing. Charles observed them from the window; and perceived Mr. Beryl hasten down the law to meet and welcome them, which he did with smiles, and in a very gentleman-like manner. He kissed the cheek of one of the ladies, whom Charles justly conclud-

ed to be his daughter ; he then conducted the party into the house, and Charles expected them every moment to enter the room ; though he could not help thinking how ill adapted the apartment was for the reception of such guests. Some minutes elapsed, but they did not appear ; and he was pondering on the many disagreeable traits he had discovered in Mr. Beryl's character, to which he scrupled not to add that of hypocrisy, (from the complaisant manner he had displayed towards the party just arrived) when that gentleman entered the room, saying,—
“ My daughter is arrived ;—glad tidings for you I think !—Won't you come and see her ? ”

Charles arose, and followed Mr. Beryl in silence to the end of the passage ; where a door presented itself, which, on being opened, discovered an apartment, which neatness, elegance, and comfort, seemed to have combined to decorate.

Here sat the party that had descended from the carriage. The youngest of the ladies stepped forward as Charles entered, and Mr. Beryl presented her as his daughter. She welcomed him with easy and lively affability, and regretted that she should have been absent at the time of his arrival. Mr. Beryl having seated himself, his daughter introduced Charles to the rest of the party, whom she named as Mr. and Mrs. Branscombe, and the Rev. Mr. Cotterel. This ceremony being over, Charles took a seat near Miss Beryl, who entered into unrestrained and familiar conversation with him.

Miss Beryl was about five and twenty; she was not handsome, yet every one fancied that she was, after having been a few times in her company, so amiable was the expression of her countenance, that bespoke a delightful harmony of disposition, which was equally apparent in all that she said: added to this, she pos-

sessed a large proportion of animal spirits which rendered her a most agreeable and enlivening companion. Charles was delighted with her, and also much pleased with Mrs. Branscombe, a mild and amiable elderly lady, who joined freely in their conversation; while the attention of the two gentleman was engrossed by Mr. Beryl; and Charles, with amazement, observed the extraordinary deference they appeared to entertain for every thing that he advanced, and the high respect their manner towards him evinced. He could not understand this at all, and could only reconcile it to the opinion he had formed of Mr. Beryl, by concluding that he contrived to impose upon those who had not an opportunity of seeing him in his domestic hours; and inspire them with a superior consideration of his merits.

The appearance of Mr. Branscombe was truly respectable; and he was by no

means a young man; what he said denoted him to be a person of understanding, yet he seemed anxious to agree in what Mr. Beryl advanced.

Mr. Cotterel (who was the vicar of the parish) appeared to be about thirty; he was a very handsome man, and was perfectly at home in presence of Mr. Beryl, who treated him with a familiar intimacy that amazed Charles, as he thought it by no means accorded with his usual manner.

Sandwichs and choice fruits were brought in to regale the guests, but no foreign wine was to be seen; but excellent cyder, and a variety of British wines, appeared to be greatly relished.

The former Charles partook of, but could not as yet form his pallet to the latter.

Having sat about an hour, Mr. and Mrs. Branscombe arose to depart; they took an affectionate leave of Miss Beryl, expressing a hope that she would speedily pay them another visit, and that they should also have the pleasure of seeing Mr. Clifford.

As soon as they were gone, Mr. Beryl said to Mr. Cotterel, who remained behind, "You will dine with us to-day, won't you, Harry?"

"No, Sir, I thank you, I have been so long out of town, I must return home to dine, but I will be with you again in the evening."

"Very well, I like a game of whist, and Charles Clifford may make the fourth."

Mr. Cotterel had been staying for some days at Mr. Branscombe's: he now shook hands with each of the party, (for he behaved towards Charles with great

cordiality), and wished them good morning. Miss Beryl walked with him across the lawn, and the moment they had left the room, Mr. Beryl said,—“Well, I suppose you feel a little more comfortable now that you have seen something like a human being? I verily believe you would have ran away, if you had been condemned to remain another day with me alone. But, however, you see my daughter is not at all like me, so you may contrive to exist with her; besides Harry Cotterel is a very pleasant fellow; and he is more here than at home: in short, you will find nobody surly and disagreeable but me.”

Charles continued silent, for he knew not what to say. Had it not been for the circumstance relative to the poor beggar, which was still fresh in his remembrance, he would have been tempted to imagine that he had been mistaken in the opinion he had formed of Mr. Beryl. At

this moment he beheld the very woman who had occupied so much of his thoughts, pass the railing that skirted the lawn, and address Miss Beryl, who was standing at the gate. Mr. Beryl also perceived her, he started up in a rage, exclaiming, "That d—d impudent woman is there again!"

He ran down the lawn, but before he could reach the gate she had hastened away. He called after her, swearing that if ever she came there again, he would commit her to Bridewell (for he was himself a justice of peace). Charles's feelings had began to soften towards Mr. Beryl, but they now once more rose up in arms against him. Mr. Beryl kept watch till the woman was out of sight, as if aware of Charles's inclination to follow, and bestow his charity on her; he then returned into the house, and called out, "Charles, if you mean to change

your dress before dinner, it is time you should set about it."

Charles was astonished to hear himself thus familiarly addressed by Mr. Beryl, yet it gave him a sensation of pleasure, though he knew not why. In obedience to the hint, he repaired to his chamber, though resolved to renew his endeavours to find out the poor beggar, when the old gentleman did not suspect him.

A short time sufficed to complete his toilet, and he descended the stairs wondering if the elegant drawing room was to be shut up again till the arrival of extraordinary company should occasion it to be re-opened.

"How vulgar!" thought Charles; "yet Miss Beryl is not vulgar; neither indeed is her father, although he is so disagreeable."

In the passage he encountered Miss Beryl in her way from the kitchen. She had on a white apron. "How vulgar!" again occurred to the mind of Charles, but Miss Beryl spoke, and the idea (spite of the *kitchen* and the *apron*) vanished.

"I am afraid," said she, as she took off her apron, and folded it up without appearing at all concerned at his having seen her in it, "I am afraid you have found every thing very uncomfortable, for my father is so extremely careless concerning his own accommodation, and so easily pleased, that he will put up with any thing when I am from home."

Charles made a suitable reply, and followed Miss Beryl to the drawing room.

Being seated, she continued,—“I regretted very much not being able to

get home yesterday, but some casualty prevented me. My father is so extremely taciturn on a first acquaintance, that I know you must have found it very dull ; but indeed, Mr. Clifford, you will form a different opinion of him when you know him better. I always fancy he has a kind of pride in making himself appear to the utmost disadvantage before strangers. I tell him there is a degree of vanity in it, and that he does it purposely that they may be the more astonished when his real character develops itself. He has some eccentricities, Mr. Clifford, but those who know him well, think them amiable ones. I believe there are, who think him parsimonious, but indeed he is not. He knows it to be his duty to practice strict economy, in order that he may have the more to bestow on those that want, but he never debars his family of any necessary comfort."

Charles was more and more charmed with Miss Beryl at every word she uttered, so fraught with genuine affection for her parent. He would willingly have believed what she said, for he liked not to think that one nearly connected with her could be so unamiable, but he thought of the poor woman, towards whom Mr. Beryl's conduct by no means corresponded with the account his daughter gave of his motives for economy; and his antipathy still existed; but to Miss Beryl's unreserved and ingenuous address, he replied, "It is not fair to form any opinion at all, on so short an acquaintance!"

"I allow it is not *fair*, but notwithstanding we are convinced of that, I think one scarcely ever remains half an hour in company with a stranger, without forming our opinion of them. This proves so frequently erroneous, that it ought to teach us to be less precipitate;

but in this respect, I think we seem to neglect the lessons of experience. For myself, I constantly feel inclined to fall into this error; but when I am tempted to form an unfavourable conclusion, I think of my father, and that compels me to withhold an illiberal decision. But I frankly acknowledge that I never can resist the charms of a beautiful exterior, and fascinating manners; and I always persist in thinking the person possessed of them, all that they appear to be, until I am absolutely compelled by undeniable proof of folly or weakness in the favourite to confess myself deceived."

"For the first time in my life, I wish myself beautiful," said Charles, smiling.

"O!" cried Miss Beryl, with a good humoured laugh, "you are quite good-looking enough to compel me to form a most favorable opinion of you; and I

feel confident that you will not disappoint me."

The dinner bell now rang, and Miss Beryl led the way to an apartment opposite to the drawing room, where was a very comfortable *salle a manger*.

As she entered, she said, "My father never will make use of these sitting rooms when I am from home; he is so fond of the library, that he sits there constantly; and indeed it looks very uncomfortable now, for in summer he will have the carpet taken up."

Mr. Beryl, as he seated himself at table, observed, "You attach too much consequence to those sort of things, Maria. What does it signify whether a room be carpeted or not? I grant you, in winter it is necessary to comfort, but if it was not for you, I would have every carpet in the house up during the sum-

mer ; it is useless extravagance, wearing them out for no purpose in the world."

The dinner on this day consisted of a piece of beef, and a gooseberry pudding, but there was a variety of vegetables, the production of the kitchen garden, and and this was replaced by a dessert of excellent fruit, and a decanter of port appeared with the British wines.

Mr. Beryl had spoken but little during the meal, but when the wine was put on the table, he said, "I perceive, Charles, you cannot accommodate your taste to our home-made wines, so I indulge you with this port, but I assure you it rarely appears at my table. I only allow it to invalids ; it costs too much to be used as any thing but physic. Indeed my conscience would not exonerate me in spending so much money merely to gratify my palate."

"Your observation is just, Sir," re-

turned Charles, who felt irresistibly influenced in favor of Mr. Beryl by the conversation he had had with his daughter; "and had I ever considered the subject in the point of view you have represented it, I think I should long since have relinquished so expensive an indulgence."

Mr. Beryl looked at him with great complacency as he pushed the port wine towards him. "No, I thank you, Sir," said Charles, "I will take some of the currant; I dare say I shall like it very much in the course of a day or two; it is merely habit that makes me prefer the port."

Mr. Beryl farther pressed him, but Charles was resolute, and it was evident that the old gentleman inwardly approved his firmness; for his manners gradually softened, and when Miss Beryl retired, he convinced Charles that he really *did* understand the nature of *social converse*.

Amongst other things, he told him that his daughter was engaged to be married to Mr. Cotterel (a union he every way approved) and that it was very shortly to take place.

CHAP. III.

“A man he was to all the country dear!”

“Unpractic’d he, to fawn or seek for pow’r;

“By doctrines fashion’d to the varying hour;

“Far other aims his heart had learnt to prize—

“More skill’d to raise the wretched, than to rise.

GOLDSMITH.

Mr. COTTEREL joined them at tea; after which a walk was proposed, and they all set off on a ramble.

They had gone but a very little way when Charles found that he had forgotten his pocket handkerchief, and he ran back for it; being directed which way he was to follow the party. He was not many moments in retracing his steps, and having procured his handkerchief, he again set

out. As he was hastening along a lane, his attention was attracted by a woman who was sitting at the door of a miserable cottage. On a second glance he recognized the beggar that had so much interested him. She was combing one of her children's heads, and so extremely disgusting was her whole appearance, and so uncommonly filthy was the cottage both inside and out, that though he hesitated, he forbore to address her. She was too busily employed to perceive him, or she would probably have importuned him for charity, which he now began to suspect she was not worthy of. He determined to enquire concerning her at some of the neighbouring cottages; which accordingly he did, and was informed that she had a husband in perfect health, who earned half-a-crown a day, and that her sickly aspect was entirely occasioned by her own excesses. His informer, a decent looking man, continued, "Mr. Beryl, Sir, at the white

house above here, (who is the most charitable man in the whole county, when he is certain that people really want) has put her two eldest children to school, that they might not be ruined by remaining with her; and now, Sir, she is so impudent that she is always plaguing him to give her money; and whenever she sees any *quality* going to the white house, she is sure to go and beg at the window, in hopes that they will give her something. Mr. Beryl has threatened often to send her to Bridewell, and indeed I wish he would, Sir, for she is a great nuisance to the neighbourhood.”

Charles was satisfied with this account; his purse remained in his pocket; and he proceeded on his way, severely blaming himself for the hasty and illiberal opinion he had formed of Mr. Beryl; and resolving for the future not to judge entirely by appearances. Charles soon overtook the little party; and after a very

pleasant walk they returned home, and played at whist till the supper was put upon the table, which was on this night improved by cream cheese and water-cresses, and raspberries and cream; but Mr. Beryl never permitted meat to be introduced at supper, except on most particular occasions, as he conceived it quite superfluous, and very unwholesome.

Miss Beryl told Charles, that to repay him for the stupid manner in which he had passed this evening, she would on the morrow introduce him to some very agreeable women, whom she described as a widow and her daughter (Mrs. and Miss Sebright) relations of her own, who resided about a mile from the town.

Charles retired much better pleased on this night than he had on that preceding; though he still anxiously anticipated the time when he should become an inmate at Lord Calisbrook's, where he knew every thing would be in the first style of elegance.

Miss Beryl was a very pleasant young woman, but then her chief attention must (of course) be monopolized by Mr. Cotterel: Mr. Beryl was only pleasant by starts, and he appeared to entertain some *vulgar* prejudices. Poor Charles's horror of vulgarity was unconquerable, and he had often been laughed at by his college friends for his favourite expression,—"How vulgar!"

CHAP. IV.



“And ne’er did Grecian chizzel trace,

“A nymph, a naiad, or a grace,

“Of finer form, or lovelier face!

LADY OF THE LAKE.

SOON after breakfast the next morning, Mr. Cotterel dropped in; and Miss Beryl and the two young gentlemen set out for the residence of Mrs. Sebright. They passed through the shrubbery, and from thence into the hanging wood.

“Now,” said Miss Beryl to Charles, “I must (with due regard to prudence, and as behoves me after our *long* friendship) put you upon your guard against the danger you are about to be exposed to; and request that you will arm your-

self with the shield of indifference, the buckler of philosophy, and the breast-plate of insensibility; and with any arrow you may choose to select but that of Cupid; which I solemnly forbid you to make use of even in self defence."

"You really alarm me," cried Charles, laughing; "what formidable attack am I to apprehend, that should render such adamantine armour requisite?"

"Why first of all, the artillery of a pair of the brightest eyes in the world; the arch and playful smiles of a most lovely mouth, which like so many riflemen wound and subdue you before you are aware of your danger; and the brisk and animated fire of a brilliant imagination. Now you must be aware that without the armour I have recommended to you, you could have no chance of withstanding such a powerful combination."

"And pray may I ask, in whom

are all these conquering charms combined?"

"In the person of Augusta Sebright. Mrs. Sebright is the widow of an officer. On the demise of her husband (which occurred many years ago) she found that it would be expedient that she should adopt a system of economy she had never before been accustomed to practice; and she retired to this county, of which she is a native, and now resides with her daughter at a very sweet cottage, the chimneys of which I can just now descry among the trees. Augusta is a most delightful girl, and though she has no fortune, I doubt not she will marry well, possessed as she is, of such superior attractions."

"Do you not think you had better turn back?" said Mr. Cotterel to Charles, laughing, "or are you resolved to face the danger?"

"O certainly! I do not experience the smallest apprehension. I have seen beauties of various descriptions, and (to

own the truth,) I never remember to have been in love for more than a day in in my life."

This was very true, Charles was a stranger to the tender passion, and believed himself to be naturally insensible to its attacks. But he had not as yet had a fair trial; he was much more accustomed to the society of men than of women: his acquaintance with the latter had chiefly arisen from his visits to the families of his male friends, and his knowledge of them had been but transient, as he had never remained long in one place, and had had neither time or opportunity to attach himself individually.

He had been encouraged by his father to form ambitious speculations on the subject of matrimony; and in this respect the youth fully met his father's wishes; for he most anxiously desired to

supply his own deficiency of connections, by a union with some lady of high birth ; and he conceived that his splendid fortune entitled him to aspire to this. He knew that Lord Calisbrook had a daughter, and his ambition had even pointed to her as the object of his pursuit.

With his mind thus impregnated with ostentatious projects, he defied the attacks of beauty, and beheld without any extraordinary emotion, the lovely Miss Sebright, who was truly such as her friend had described her.

Her mother (who was not more than forty) was no less conspicuous for the innate gentility which displayed itself in her mild and gentle manners. The residence which sheltered these two amiable people, was an elegant cottage, that displayed all the comforts and convenience of refinement under the semblance of rusticity.

It was most romantically situated about a short mile from Mr. Beryl's, to whose house the path lay almost entirely through hanging woods.

After spending a couple of hours with her friends, Miss Beryl and her two attendants took the way homeward, but not before she had promised to return early in the evening to drink tea.

Mr. Cotterel dined at Mr. Beryl's; after dinner the conversation turned on the profession of the church. Mr. Beryl said, "Did not your father rather wish you to be bred to the church, Charles?"

"I believe he thought of it at one time, Sir; but I rather objected to it; for though I have the strongest veneration for the profession, I do not think my disposition sufficiently sedate to calculate me for so sacred a function."

"O nonsense, boy! it is no reason because you are a parson, that you should

not laugh ! However, if you are resolved not to be of that profession, I see no use in your continuing any longer at college, spending money for nothing, I shall write to Lord Calisbrook, and acquaint him with my opinion ; I know very well what his answer will be ; “He will leave it entirely to me ;” this is his invariable reply whenever I consult him. So, Charles, I don’t think you will return to College ; you must spend six months with us, and, after Christmas, you may repair to my Lord Calisbrook’s in London. I know you will like that, for it will just be the fashionable time of the year to go to town ; so you must live on the anticipation of the pleasure you will then have ; and, in the interim, put up with our stupidity as well as you can.”

Charles did not much relish the idea of spending six months at Mr. Beryl’s, and would greatly have preferred returning to Oxford at the end of the vaca-

tion; but he said nothing to oppose Mr. Beryl's proposition, and only observed that he had left two horses with a groom at Oxford; it had been his intention that they should follow him provided Mr. Beryl approved of it.

"Two horses, and a groom! besides another man servant with you!" exclaimed Mr. Beryl. "What useless extravagance! Did you do this in your father's life-time?"

"Yes, Sir, he always allowed me to keep two horses."

"How absurd! I tell you what, Charles, you never, with my approbation, shall keep more than *one* horse, and *one* man, while you continue my ward. But, however, you will do as you please, but I certainly shall not advance you one farthing beyond your yearly allowance, which I think very handsome, and more than you ought to spend."

"I shall not do any thing in oppo-

sition to your wishes, Sir, if I can possibly avoid it. But what do you advise me to do in regard to my horses?"

"Why write to some friend at Oxford to dispose of them for you, and dismiss your groom. We can easily find a horse in this neighbourhood that will do very well for your purpose; and what should hinder the fellow who attends your person, to take care of your horse; I am sure three parts of his time is spent in idleness."

"It would be very unpleasant to have a man about one's person, who was accustomed to attend a horse; he must always smell of the stable, and his dirty coarse hands would be very unfit to touch one's cloaths."

"O, I will allow him soap to wash his hands as often as he pleases; and as to the smell of a stable, some people are very partial to it; I am, for one. But, however, to obviate every difficulty, my

~~cow~~ boy can take care of your horse; he will be able to find time to rub him down *once* a day."

Charles took no notice of this proposal, (which he knew was only made in derision) but observed, that "he did not think James (alluding to his valet) would like to take care of a horse, though he knew he was competent if he chose to do it, as he had once served him in the capacity of groom."

"Not *like* it! that is most excellent!" cried Mr. Beryl. "Do you generally *consult* the gentleman as to what he may *like* to do before you give him your orders? This really is too ridiculous! I am surprised to hear you talk so foolish!"

"Indeed, Sir," said Charles, colouring, "James is a most excellent servant, and very much attached to me. He has lived with me for two years, and I own I am partial to him."

“*Two* years! a very long period to be sure, to make a trial of his fidelity! I tell you, you will ruin him by indulgence. I will engage he does not stay a year longer with you, for he will become so insufferably insolent and overbearing, that you won’t be able to endure him yourself!”

“I assure you, Sir, you are mistaken in the opinion you have formed of him. However, I will sound him about taking care of the horse, and—”

“*Sound* him!” cried Mr. Beryl, interrupting him; “can’t you tell him at once that you require him to do so, and that if he does not choose to do it, you will get somebody in his place who will? —*Sound* him indeed! what nonsense!”

“Well, Sir, I will tell him what I wish him to do, and write to a friend at Oxford, as you advise me, concerning my horses, and to tell the groom that as soon as he can get a good place, I can dispense with his services. I cannot turn

the poor fellow upon the world, and take his provision from him before he has found another situation; he has served me very faithfully."

"And pray for how long?"

"Six months, Sir. He is a capital groom!"

"Capital groom!" echoed Mr. Beryl; "the sooner you get rid of him the better."

Miss Beryl now joined the gentlemen, and proposed setting off for Mrs. Sebright's, whither Mr. Beryl also accompanied them.

The only person they found there in addition to the family, was a Mr. Temple, a very agreeable man, between forty and fifty; and Charles was informed by Miss Beryl that he was one of the most wealthy gentlemen in the county. Charles immediately took it into his head that Mr. Temple was a

suitor of Miss Sebright, who, he conceived, might be induced to look favourably on him on account of his riches; more particularly as his person was prepossessing, as well as his address.

Whether from a spirit of coquetry, or from experiencing that admiration Miss Sebright was so framed to inspire, Charles paid her particular attention throughout the evening, which passed most agreeably to all parties.

Miss Beryl was not more animated than her friend Augusta, whose manners and conversation were no less attractive than her person.

She appeared gratified by Charles's assiduities—

“Not his the form, nor his the eye,

“That youthful maidens want to fly!”

but not the slightest tincture of levity was discernible in her behaviour; nor had she attained that elevated degree of modern refinement in manners, so conspicuous in many of our sex in the present day, who, by a single word or even look, never fail to inform a gentleman (after they have been five minutes in his company) that he may consider himself as an *old* acquaintance; and by a familiar smile, or jocular address, break down at once every bar to an unreserved intimacy; and this too before they know any thing of the person, but his name, (nay, even that they may not have distinctly heard on being introduced to him, or, perhaps, they may have thought the ceremony of introduction superfluous) and are entirely ignorant whether or not he be of that description of men, it would be prudent to admit upon a friendly footing.

On her return home Miss Beryl found

an invitation to spend the next day at Mrs. Branscombe's. The note informed her that the coach would be sent for her, Mr. Beryl, and Mr. Clifford. Mr. Cotterel also was expected; and the carriage was to take up Mrs. and Miss Sebright.

Charles felt something like anticipation of this party, nor were his expectations disappointed.

The ensuing morning Mrs. Sebright and her daughter called on Miss Beryl, and after spending some time with her returned home to dress for the dinner party, and Charles gallantly escorted the ladies home.

At Mr. Branscombe's were assembled some of the most genteel families in the neighbourhood; but as they are not destined to make a figure in this history, we shall not particularize them.

“ Mark well, as foreign as these subjects seem,
“ What close connection ties them to my theme.”*

Mr. Temple was present; there was a familiarity and affection in his manner towards Augusta Sebright, that confirmed Clifford's suspicions; yet he thoughtlessly, imprudently, nay, we might almost say cruelly, redoubled his attention to Miss Sebright, who, though behaving with the utmost complacency towards Mr. Temple, discovered an artless satisfaction arising from Clifford's particular assiduity to please her.

CHAP. V.

‘ Quand on brûle au feu que sois même on attise,
“ Ce n’est pas accident, mais c’est une sottise.”

REGNIER.

IT would be tedious to follow Charles through every day at the present juncture; indeed after the three or four first, *one* was nearly a transcript of the other.

No sooner was breakfast over, than (under the pretext of taking a ramble) he invariably pursued his path to Mrs. Sebright’s residence.

He was sometimes accompanied by Miss Beryl, and usually encountered Mr. Temple at the cottage, where Charles

always lingered till the last moment, and often felt provoked, that the *gothic* hour at which Mr. Beryl dined, compelled him to curtail the length of his morning visits; though he generally contrived an excuse for returning in the evening, if he was not in expectation of meeting the ladies elsewhere.

Yet Charles did not think himself in love, perhaps, because he did not choose to examine his heart too closely; yet every body else (the lovely Augusta not excepted) conceived him to be sincerely attached. True, he had never breathed a word of love to her, but his looks and manner plainly bespoke an impassioned heart; and had Augusta been less anxious on the subject, she would have believed his present conduct to be only the forerunner of an explanation, which ought always to follow similar behaviour. But, that *such* an explanation

was expected, or that honor required it should be made, Charles never considered. To have united himself to the portionless daughter of an officer, would have completely annihilated all his ambitious projects. He had no other view in thus courting the society and smiles of Augusta, but the gratification of his own feelings. He was always happy in her company, and dull when out of it; for which simple reason he continued in it as much as possible, though he fancied he still looked forward with eager anticipation to the period which should transplant him to the region of fashion; yet unless some accident brought that time to his mind he scarcely ever thought of it.

In answer to the letter he had written to his friend at Oxford, concerning his horses and groom, he received the following.

“ Dear Clifford,

“ I inquired, according to your directions for Joe Burt, your groom, and was informed that shortly after you left Oxford, he disposed of your horses to a gentleman going into Scotland; whose name my informer was ignorant of. Joe told him that you had left orders with him to sell them. The next day he decamped himself, saying he was going to join you. He got a hundred and eighty guineas for the blood horse, and fifty for the mare.

“ I have made every possible inquiry after him, but in vain; and I fear you will never recover your money. I always thought Joe was a rascal. I have since heard that he was formerly a jockey at Newmarket, but was forced to give up that trade, as he was discovered to have taken bribes from L——.

“I lament extremely that you are not to return to college, but hope we shall meet in town in the spring.

“I heartily condole with you on your present interment, and looking forward to the time of your resurrection,

I remain,

Your's truly,

GEORGE GERNINGHAM.”

Charles was greatly discomposed by the contents of this letter; he dreaded Mr. Beryl's comments upon them, and the lecture he doubted not he should receive from him:

James was in the room while his master was reading his letter, who immediately acquainted him with the purport of it, at the same time execrating the dishonest groom.

He now mentioned to James his wish

that he would undertake to attend to the horse Mr. Beryl was about to purchase for him. At the very first intimation of this plan James evinced his displeasure by his sullen looks, and then asked his master how he could suppose he would do such a thing? and added, that he was surprised he should think of proposing it.

The master became wrath, and threatened to knock down the domestic, whose insolence increased; he swore he would not stay another day in his service; and at length became so insufferably impudent, that Charles pushed him out of his chamber, and certainly would have kicked him down stairs, had not Mr. Beryl at that moment been ascending.

Having heard a violent noise and elevated voices, he was coming to inquire

what was the matter. Of this he was now informed by Charles, who was much confused; and Mr. Beryl could scarcely conceal his satisfaction, so rejoiced was he at finding a fair opportunity of getting rid of an inmate, to whom he had taken a strong antipathy, from the very first moment he had beheld his powdered head, and *would-be* gentleman-like appearance.

Mr. James was speedily dismissed, though he attempted to make some apology for his behaviour, in the hope of being permitted to retain his easy situation, which he had in reality no intention of voluntarily resigning; but he was not attended to; and when he was fairly out of the house, Mr. Beryl felicitated Charles upon his departure.

But there was no derision in his manner on this occasion; *that* was never

brought forward but as a weapon against (what he conceived) absurdity, but he ever forbore to display it when he had gained the victory.

Charles was also astonished at the composure with which he received the intelligence of the loss sustained through the villany of the groom.

“Two hundred and thirty pounds,” said he, “is an immense sum certainly to lose in such a foolish manner; but, however, I think I would willingly give it to get rid of two such fellows as you have now shaken off. I hope it will be a warning to you for the future, how you confide in these people. I will look out for a country servant for you, to supply the place of this fine gentleman, and though I hope he will be worthy of being trusted, I also hope that experience will teach you not to trust him too much.”

CHAP VI.



"Parson, these things in thy possessing,
"Are better than the bishop's blessing!"

SWIFT.

THREE months passed away in the manner before described, when Miss Beryl gave her hand to Mr. Cotterel, and both were happy.

She removed to his residence (the parsonage house) where domestic felicity was displayed to perfection.

This event made little difference to Charles, who was, in fact, so little at Mr. Beryl's, that the absence of his amiable daughter was scarcely felt by him.

That young lady perceived with the utmost complacency, his attentions to her friend Augusta. She most anxiously hoped to see her his wife; she felt a sisterly affection for Charles, and believed him to be possessed of all the qualifications requisite to promote her friend's happiness. Augusta had every thing but money, and Charles had of that enough for both. The amiable Maria was ever sanguine, and always believed what she wished.

If Mr. Beryl ever observed Clifford's attention to Augusta, he never evinced any disapprobation of it, though he sometimes hinted to him, that he was too young to think of matrimony *yet*.

In short, the only person that experienced any unhappiness on this subject was Augusta herself. Peace no longer reigned undisturbed in her gentle bosom, which, for the first time, was agitated

by doubt, uncertainty, and trembling hope.

The hours imperceptibly stole away ; day after day passed over, unmarked by any change, save the increasing uneasiness of Augusta.

Charles's attentions continued unremitting ; he was her very shadow ; yet never, even by an unguarded word, did he betray that the idea of a speedy marriage engrossed any part of his thoughts.

Augusta vainly sought to account for his reserve on this subject ; for though the apprehension of his guardians not approving of his connecting himself with her might prevent his proposing an immediate union, yet (if he were really attached to her, which she firmly believed to be the case) why should he not declare his passion to herself, and endeavour to

secure her affections, and obtain her promise to be his the moment he became his own master?—A thousand times did she resolve seriously to repel his assiduities, and treat him with distant reserve until he should be more explicit; but this resolution generally gave way on his re-appearance, and at most was never abided by for more than half an hour; and this transient coldness never failed to create a more animated interest on both sides the moment it had subsided.

In such unprofitable pastime were the days consumed, to the utter destruction of that peaceful serenity which had been wont to exist in the tranquil breast of Augusta.

Those objects which had once excited her liveliest feelings, were now viewed with apathy; those occupations which had once engrossed her time to her satisfaction, were now resorted to with reluct-

tance and distaste; and the idea of one thankless individual superseded every former object of interest.

Nor was that individual perfectly at his ease, though he endeavoured to persuade himself that he was so; and also that he was highly delighted that the time was now so near which was to behold him a resident in the family of Lord Calisbrook.

The Christmas festival was past; the inclemency of the weather had not kept Charles from the cottage, nor even occasioned him to give up his frequent visits; and nightly he formed one of the party that surrounded Mrs. Sebright's chearful fire-side.

“ Le Printemps nous disperse, et l'hiver nous rallie,

“ Auprès de nos foyers notre ame recueillie,

“ Goute le doux commerce à tout les coeurs si chere,

“ Oui ! l'instinct social est enfant de l'hiver !

“ En cercle, un meme attrait, rassemble autour de
“ La viellesse conteuse, et l'enfance folatre. [l'autre,
“ La courent á la ronde, et les propos joyeux,
“ Et la vielle romance, et les amiables jeux :
“ La sé dedommagent de ses longues absences
“ Chacun vient retrouver sescheres connoissances.
“ La s'épanche le cœur : le plus penible aveu,
“ Longtems captif ailleurs, echappe au coin de feu ! *

Augusta was aware of the period fixed on for Clifford's repairing to London, but as he had not for some time alluded to it, she fondly hoped that his affection for her had induced him to seek out some pretext for delaying his visit to Lord Calisbrook. How then was she surprised and shocked, when Charles, one evening, told them, with perfect indifference, that he was to set off for town the day after to-morrow, and should be very happy to execute any commissions they might have for him; at the same time he affected great glee at the idea of his excursion; and talked with ap-

parent pleasure, of the gaiety he anticipated.

For the first few moments after this communication was made, Augusta spoke not, but she endeavoured as far as was in her power to prevent her countenance from betraying her feelings.

The sensation she first experienced was sudden misery at the thoughts of his departure; but this was rapidly succeeded by resentment at the total unconcern, nay satisfaction, which he manifested, and she exerted herself to appear equally careless.

She succeeded tolerably well, indeed, better than he did, after this first display of over-acted joy, a sensation which was in reality as foreign to his heart at this moment, as it was to that of Augusta! He had been *dreading*, rather than anticipating, his departure for some days,

and felt an insurmountable reluctance to informing his friends at the cottage of the exact period at which it was to take place. But he could now no longer with propriety delay mentioning it; and anxious to hide his real feelings, he came prepared to exhibit the utmost unconcern on the occasion. But when he found that Augusta appeared equally indifferent, he was surprised, and no less (though most unjustly) displeased; and he could not, as he had intended, support the part he wished to sustain; and during the whole evening he was out of humour, abstracted, and evidently disturbed.

Augusta took very little notice of him, only addressing him in common with others; and he returned home thoroughly dissatisfied. But doubtless his feelings would have been greatly soothed, could he have been sensible of the manner in which the injured Augusta (for *injured* she certainly was) passed the night.

She was resolved to tear from her heart, an object she no longer deemed worthy of the place he had attained there.

But many a pang did this resolution cost her ; and many a tear she shed, and many a sigh she heaved, 'ere she could put it in execution.

She concluded that he would call the ensuing morning to bid them farewell, but she determined not to see him again. She reflected with the deepest humiliation on the complacency with which she had ever treated him, and doubted not he believed that she was attached to him, and had played with her affections for a temporary amusement ; she was resolved he should do so no longer.

As she expected, he called in the morning ; he was informed that both the ladies were out, for Augusta had prevailed.

on her mother to take a long walk with her.

Charles felt still more discomposed but determined to make another attempt, to see them in the evening, which he did, but with as little success; the ladies were gone to pass the evening at the house of a person with whom he was not acquainted; otherwise he probably might have followed them.

Vexed and mortified to the quick, he returned to Mr. Beryl's, fully resolved to think no more of Augusta, but fix his whole imagination on the anticipated pleasures of the metropolis, and his ambitious scheme of making himself agreeable to the *Honorable* Miss Villeroy, the daughter of Lord Calisbrook!

But vain were all his endeavours to turn his thoughts into this channel; the

the lovely image of Augusta Sebright was not to be so easily banished; and spite of all his efforts to exclude her idea, she, and she alone retained despotic dominion in his imagination, during his journey to London; which he performed (according to Mr. Beryl's advice) by the mail coach; while his servant (a lad Mr. Beryl had procured for him in the country) took his place on the outside.

But this mode of travelling Mr. Clifford relinquished when within twenty miles of the capital; he there ordered a post chaise and four, as he could not think of *disgracing* his noble patron by being driven up to the door of his mansion in a *vulgar hackney coach*, which he must have entered on leaving the mail in order to be conducted to Lord Calisbrook's.

It may have been before observed,

that Charles had a tincture of ostentation in his composition; perhaps, had his father been a nobleman, he (Charles) would not have attached such consequence to trifles, which, in reality, could not possibly either augment or depreciate his dignity in the estimation of the wise.

It was impossible Mrs. Sebright could fail to observe her daughter's dejection, though that amiable young lady concealed it as far as was in her power. Mrs. Sebright attributed it to the true cause, yet she was not offended with Mr. Clifford, for she believed him to be sincerely attached to Augusta, though he himself might at this time be unconscious of it, but she doubted not that a temporary absence would convince him of the state of his heart, and that ultimately a proposal of marriage would be the result. Mrs. Cotterel was not so well satisfied with Charles's conduct;

she was convinced by her friend's manner, that he had not been so explicit as he ought to have been, and she felt by no means in charity with him.

CHAP. VII.



“Forward and frolic glee was there,
“The will to do, the soul to dare;
“The sparkling glance soon blown to fire,
“Of hasty love, or headlong ire!”

WALTER SCOT.

Mr. CLIFFORD arrived in town about twelve o'clock at noon, having purposely delayed at the two last stages, being apprehensive that the family would not be up if he got there earlier.

He was highly gratified with the costly magnificence and splendid profusion, conspicuous in every thing in and about Lord Calisbrook's spacious mansion in Arlington Street.

Breakfast was prepared for him in an elegant *boudoir* to which was attached a chamber, dressing room, and anti-chamber.

He was informed by a servant out of livery (whom he afterwards found to be Lord Calisbrook's gentleman) that these apartments were appropriated entirely to him.

On enquiring for his lordship, Mr. Clifford was told that he had not been many hours in bed, having been at a party the night before, where he had *breakfasted* ere he returned home.

He had left orders with his own man, to take care that every attention was paid to Mr. Clifford, who he expected would arrive on that day.

Charles enquired for the rest of the family. Miss Villeroy was at home, but she always breakfasted in her own

room, when her brothers were out of town; and the young gentlemen had been in the country for a few days, but were expected home to dine.

Charles felt perfectly satisfied, notwithstanding that his interview with the family was protracted for some hours; for every thing around him was so truly elegant, so thoroughly congenial to his taste and nature, that he fancied he had never before felt so completely at home; or so much at his ease.

He contrasted the aspect of this scene with that of Mr. Beryl's residence on the first day of his arrival there; and the fascinations of his present abode augmented by the comparison.

He looked at the luxurious feast spread before him, abounding in superfluities, and thought of Mr. Beryl's frugal repast, while he did ample justice to

the delicacies that tempted his palate; for unfortunately he had one propensity which militated strongly against his ever making any figure as a hero of romance; that was an inclination (which he always complied with) to satisfy a remarkably good appetite; which never deserted him but on most extraordinary occasions.

Breakfast being removed, he took up a morning paper, which the servant had laid before him; with this he amused himself for some time, when he commenced an examination of some books that were arranged in small cases round the apartment.

About three o'clock the door was thrown open by an attendant, who announced "The Honorable Mr. Clarence Villeroy!" and a young man of the most prepossessing appearance flew forward with extended hand to Clifford,

whom he welcomed in animated language, lamenting that he should have been absent at the moment of his arrival. Charles replied with equal vivacity to this cordial address, and in less than a quarter of an hour these two young men were as intimate as if they had known each other for years. Indeed it would have been next to impossible to have maintained any degree of coldness or reserve towards Clarence Villeroy: there was that lively ingenuousness, that easy familiarity in his manner which banishes all ceremony; added to this, a more captivating exterior could rarely be beheld. The brilliant animation of his dark eyes rendered words almost superfluous to express his feelings, which were ever apparent in his countenance, where the most amiable association of features, enlivened by a complexion, (which though beautiful, was almost too delicate to bespeak perfect health) combined to in-

terest every beholder. In height he was what is generally esteemed the standard of beauty, being about five feet ten.

He was extremely well made, but his figure was somewhat disguised by a slight inclination of the body, occasioned by the extreme energy with which he always spoke; for he never expressed himself but with a degree of eagerness that denoted the quickness of his feelings, and caused him to bend forward with an intense gaze on the features of the person he was accosting, in order to ascertain if they *felt* what he said.

He was much gratified by the sympathy of mind, he thought he had discovered in his new friend; and after sitting a long time with him, he said he would conduct him to the drawing room, where he concluded his father and sister now were.

"I suppose," continued Mr. Villeroy, as they proceeded along the gallery, "you know that *I* am Lord Calisbrook's youngest son? My brother will remain in the country a few days longer, but I think I can contrive to entertain you, with the assistance of my numerous friends."

Charles doubted it not. Lord Calisbrook received him with all the easy grace of a polished courtier, and professed himself most happy in having him beneath his roof.

Charles was completely fascinated by the manners of both father and son. But not equally gratifying was the reception he met with from Miss Villeroy, which though polite and unstudied, was any thing but gracious or inviting; and plainly denoted a consciousness of superiority that grated on Clifford's feelings; and he thought of Augusta!

Several gentlemen joined the party at dinner, which was served about seven o'clock.

Miss Villeroy presided at the *feast*, for such it might justly be denominated.

It consisted of *three* entire courses, in which every rarity *in* or *out* of season appeared; and so many servants attended, that if half of them had not remained inactive, they would have been running against each other.

Shortly after the cloth was removed, Miss Villeroy withdrew, when a variety of choice wines were circulated very freely, and a conversation more exhilarating than instructive, was *as* freely pursued.

About midnight the gentlemen began to move, and some enquired of the

others, how they meant to dispose of the *remainder* of the *evening*? They had various engagements; Lord Calisbrook and his son were going to different parties.

CHAP. VIII.



“ Well dress’d, well bred,
“ Well equipag’d, is ticket good enough
“ To pass as readily thro’ every door.

“ She that asks
“ Her dear five hundred friends, contemns them all,
“ And hates their coming. They (what can they less)
“ Make just reprisals; and with cringe and shrug,
“ And bow obsequious, hide their hate of her.”

COWPER.

CLARENCE VILLEROY invited Clifford to accompany him to two or three houses, where he said he must of necessity shew himself.

Charles complied, though at this moment he felt much more inclined to go to bed, as he had been up the two preceding nights; added to which, the more than

usual quantity of wine he had taken, increased his inclination to sleep. However, he suffered himself to be dragged through one crowded room after another, till about four o'clock in the morning, when his companion (who now appeared as completely weary as himself) consented to return home.

He had hurried from place to place with such restless rapidity, that Charles had not even the opportunity of making any observations on what he saw.

Clarence Villeroy keeping fast hold of his arm, drew him as expeditiously as it was possible, through a whole suite of crowded apartments, which having once traversed, he declared there was nothing there that could afford amusement, not a soul to speak to, and immediately hurried him off to another party of a similar description, which he conducted him through in a similar manner,

himself nodding familiarly to many ladies of his acquaintance, whose eyes he happened to catch, but whom it was impossible to approach or converse with, unless the tide of the crowd happened to bring you in conjunction with them.

Once Charles caught a glimpse of Lord Calisbrook, and *once* of his daughter, at different parties, but it was out of his power to get near them.

He was surprised to hear his companion declare that there was scarcely a night that he was not *obliged* to shew himself at half a dozen of these assemblies; observing at the same time, that it was the greatest bore in the world!

Charles very naturally inquired, "Why then did he attend them?"

To which he replied, "O, because people would think one was absolutely out of the world if one did not appear at the houses of particular persons during the season. It is now unfortunately only just beginning. I shall be heartily glad when it is over, though I have been longing for it all the summer."

This was actually the case. Clarence Villeroy had a mind which required something more, than the pursuit of dissipation to interest it; yet this he was himself unconscious of, and because he knew not how else to employ himself, he (from habit, and in compliance with fashion) followed the example of other young men of his acquaintance: and there were moments when he really believed himself to be the most miserable creature in existence. For from the time he had become familiar with scenes of (what is termed) pleasure, and the no-

vely had worn off, he had scarcely ever felt amused or interested.

This he could not account for, and believing it to be a natural infirmity of his disposition, he flew from one place to another, in hopes of exciting those sensations he thought dead in his breast; and with unremitting impetuosity, he pursued the morbid influence of satiety, disguised under the garb of enjoyment. He had anticipated the arrival of Charles Clifford from the idea that in him he should find something *new*.

The sun was fast declining when Charles left his bed the day after his arrival in town.

On reflecting on the manner in which he had spent the preceding night, his ideas suddenly reverted to the select parties he had frequently met at Mrs. Sebright's, and in that neighbourhood.

But he did not like to acknowledge, even to himself, that the assemblies of the *beau monde* could possibly be stupid and wearisome, and not to have relished them he imagined would have been truly plebeian.

However, by the end of a week, by which time he was completely initiated by his new friend into all the scenes of fashionable resort, and the most modern (and *of course refined*) expedients for killing time, he found that it was by no means necessary that he should *profess* to be amused ; on the contrary, a habit of abusing every thing that they saw, and deriding both the persons and manners of those whose houses they frequented, appeared to be universal among the young men ; as well as an avowed disgust and weariness of those places of amusement, which they nevertheless continued to repair to. Yet there were some things which really entertained and interested

Charles—the theatres, the opera, &c.; but his companions laughed at him when he evinced any approbation or pleasure, and expressed their astonishment that he could derive amusement from any thing so flat and stale.

Charles had, as yet, seen very little either of Lord Calisbrook, or his daughter; to excepting two days, when there had been company at home, he and Mr. Villeroy had dined out at gentlemen's parties.

From the observations he had made on Miss Villeroy, he could not entertain the slightest hopes of succeeding in his ambitious schemes, at least as far as related to her; for her manner towards him was indifference itself; she scarcely seemed to know that he was present, and her conversation was always monopolized by some man of rank and talents. She certainly was handsome, and her figure

was graceful and commanding; but her countenance neither expressed contentment or affability, though it was not unfrequently illumined by a smile, which seemed rather to play upon the surface of her features, than to proceed from her heart.

Lord Calisbrook had once been a handsome man, but the effects of a dissipated life were very legible in his face. He was extremely pleasant in society; always appeared in remarkably good spirits; he was a great talker and a great laughier; and if he could find any one to talk and laugh with, he did not seem to have a thought beyond the passing moment. His children might do as they liked, provided they gave him no trouble. His eldest son had been many years in the army, and had now attained the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. He had lately returned from the West Indies in a very impaired state of health. Clarence Villeroy would

have followed his example, and have made the army his profession, had it not been for the united entreaties of his sister and brother. Colonel Villeroy was conscious that the path he had made choice of rendered his life peculiarly precarious, and in case of his demise, his brother would be the only surviving heir to the title, which in default of the male issue of Lord Calisbrook, would be extinct on the death of his lordship. For this reason, both the Colonel and his sister were anxious that Clarence should adopt some profession which should at least prevent his being exposed to any extraordinary casualty; for as he was at present a younger brother, it was expedient that he should secure an independance for himself.

Clarence had promised to think seriously on this subject, but, however, he had reached the age of twenty-three without having decided upon what line

of life he would pursue, and (on his return from abroad, after three years absence) Colonel Villeroy found him exactly in the same wavering temper of mind, in which he had left him.

The Colonel again spoke very seriously to him on the subject, and again Clarence promised to think very seriously; for he was tenderly attached to his brother. Indeed his heart was peculiarly alive to the softest sensations, and his feelings so susceptible, as to be frequently affected to the most painful degree upon the slightest occasion; yet had he that volatility of disposition that prevented his attending to any thing which he believed only concerned his own individual interest, and he required some greater stimulus to impel his exertions.

Colonel Villeroy was now on half-pay, for his health was in too precarious a state to permit him to do duty with his

regiment: and it was about this time that the *Peace of Amiens* (eighteen hundred and two) afforded military men an opportunity of absenting themselves from their respective corps without an detriment to the service.

CHAP. IX.



"The feast is spread. The harp is heard; and joy is in the hall. But it was joy covering a sigh that darkly dwelt in every breast. It was like the faint beam of the moon spread on a cloud in Heaven."

OSSIAN.

ON Colonel Villeroy's return to town, he was introduced by his brother to Mr. Clifford, who did not feel that instantaneous prepossession in favor of the Colonel, which he had experienced at the first sight of Clarence.

Colonel Villeroy was at least six feet high. His person was reduced by recent sickness. His features strongly resembled his brother's, with the exception of his eyes, which were dark blue, instead of hazel, and his hair considerably lighter.

His complexion had once been ruddy, and of a much more healthy appearance than his brother's, but his cheeks were now almost colourless, and his residence in a tropical climate had not tended to improve the hue of his skin. But the expression of his whole contour was quite the reverse of that animated vivacity that shone on the features of Clarence.

His countenance was overcast by a deep shade of melancholy, and when he smiled it seemed an effort; yet the smile had something more sweet in it than could possibly be expressed, and discovered the whitest teeth imaginable; it was such a smile as never could have been met by a frown! it spoke the very harmony of virtue, and plainly denoted that though it shone so seldom, it was not repelled by the consciousness of past error, but by sorrow and regret for the weakness and imprudence of others.

The first time Charles observed this smile, he watched it subside with a mournful sensation, and wished he could have retained it on the features which appeared so peculiarly interesting under its influence. “It is lovely, O Malvina! but it melts the soul.”

Colonel Villeroy had been little more than a month in England. After spending a short time with his family, he had gone to visit a maternal uncle who resided a few miles from the capital; with him he had continued until now, as neither his health or inclination, were suited to the dissipation of the town.

This, he had avowed to his sister, and also had informed her that if she could not consent to remain more at home, and make his residence with his family more congenial to his feelings, he must seek out some quiet situation to retire to, until his health were re-established. Miss

Villeroy was frequently driven into parties, from which she derived no satisfaction, merely from reluctance to sitting at home alone, and with pleasure she promised to adopt a more retired way of life, at the suit of a brother she fondly loved.

On the day of Colonel Villeroy's return to town, the family sat down to dinner without being joined by any guest, for the first time since Charles had become a member of it. Nevertheless, the same abundance of superfluities appeared on the table, and three regular courses were served up; this was, in fact, the invariable style of living, company, or no company.

Colonel Villeroy drunk very little but in compliment to his father, (who never rose from table without his bottle) he sat some time after dinner; when all the

gentlemen joined Miss Villeroy in the drawing room.

Lord Calisbrook shortly after left them to fulfil his evening engagements ; for to spend one night at home was quite out of the question with him.

Clarence declared to his brother that he would not have left him, *only* that he could not think of allowing Mr. Clifford to spend an evening *en famille*, and he must absolutely accompany him to some place of amusement. But Charles interfered, and averred with truth, that he should greatly prefer remaining at home.

Clarence had thus no excuse left for going out, and the hours passed off most agreeably to every individual of the little party ; though Clarence had fancied he should be quite stupified. He was surprised to find that he retired to rest with a more satisfied sensation, and in better

spirits than he had for a long time before.

Though Charles had been but a short time in London, he had through the restless activity of his constant companion, obtained a very thorough insight into high life, and the customary pursuits of young men of fashion; and he found that the only pleasure connected with them was in the anticipation; and that the feelings they excited in his breasts were of a very different description to what he had conceived would be the result of his initiation into the higher circles.

He could not disguise from himself that he enjoyed more real satisfaction in the space of one hour passed in the society of Augusta Sebright, than he had felt in the whole course of the time he had been in town.

“Those who such simple joys have known,

“Are taught to prize them when they’re gone.”

Yet the weak ambition that had taken possession of his breast, made him consider it as folly and imprudence, to encourage a thought of Augusta, who (in a worldly point of view) he conceived was too much beneath him, to unite himself to.

It required time, and still greater experience of the insufficiency of pomp and splendor to constitute happiness or even content, to convince Charles of the fallacy of his opinions on this subject.

He was pretty certain that he had no chance whatever of succeeding with Miss Villeroy; for though on the preceding evening she had behaved to him with good natured civility, her manner was such as conveyed a thorough persuasion that he never could have the presumption to betray even his admiration of her.

Besides which, a noble and wealthy Earl had professed himself her adorer, and it was generally concluded that she intended to accept him.

But Miss Villeroy was not the *only* young lady of rank and fashion he could now number amongst his acquaintance. He had, by his friend Clarence, been introduced to a variety of belles of ton, who, in general, treated him with great complacency; and Charles did not think himself of less consequence because Miss Villeroy did not regard him with a favorable aspect.

Charles felt fully sensible that he had not as yet seen one woman who could bear a competition with Augusta, and as often as the thought of matrimony occurred to his mind, as often did he regret with a sigh that Augusta had not distinguished connections, and was not a reigning beauty. He forgot that had

that been the case, she would probably no longer have been remarkable for that unaffected and ingenuous manner, which had been the means of charming him much more effectually than her beautiful person; and that she might with still greater probability have considered him as much beneath her notice as did Miss Villeroy.

Something like a domestic circle now appeared at Lord Calisbrook's, though he himself rarely formed a member of it; while Colonel Villeroy as rarely joined in that vortex in which alone his father seemed to live.

Miss Villeroy was the almost inseparable companion of her eldest brother; who at times laboured under a cloud of the deepest dejection, but at others, he discovered an extraordinary brilliancy of imagination, depth of understanding, and vivacity of genius; when surrounded

by a few select friends, who were frequently invited to join the evening party.

Clifford soon found that these were all persons of extraordinary abilities, and conspicuous for uncommon mental endowments, or rare talents.

He had sufficient reflection to be aware that the society of such people would be of infinite service to him, and engender a train of reflections in his mind, that would give it something to feed on. He, therefore, with a steadiness that did honor to his good sense, avoided the scenes of unprofitable dissipation which he had resorted to on his arrival in town, and nightly formed one of Colonel Villeroy's *coterie*. Neither were the fair sex excluded from it; at which the reader may perhaps experience some degree of surprise, after my having affirmed that each

individual of this little society, was possessed of *extraordinary abilities*, or *rare talents*. Yet I trust that the indubitable, repeated, and various instances, in which the intellectual capabilities of the softer sex have evinced themselves, will preserve them from so unjust a sarcasm; and that the liberal minded reader will allow that they have a right to be admitted to an assemblage of *bel esprit*.

Now I have no doubt that this same *liberal* minded reader (notwithstanding his *liberality*) is at this moment censuring the harmless, unassuming author of this history, and imputing to her an inordinate portion of presumption, from an idea (that he may probably entertain), that she imagines herself to be one of the living *instances* above alluded to.

If such be his opinion, I must beg leave, with all due deference and consi-

deration, to assure him that it is founded on error; as she neither conceives herself, nor the generality of those who have, like her, explored the labyrinths of fiction, entitled (on *that* account) to the honors due to those, whose more important productions, and profound and successful exertions, have proved the power, and established the fame, of the female capacity and understanding!

Clarence Villeroy sometimes joined these parties, and though he never failed to derive satisfaction from them, he was so much in the habit of pursuing his accustomed evening lounge that he could not entirely give it up.

The more Charles saw of Colonel Villeroy, the more was he charmed with him; and he soon found that though the impression he had received on a first sight of him had been less lively than that pro-

duced by his brother, yet the interest which he had gradually awakened in his heart, was of a nature infinitely superior to the boyish sympathy he had felt towards Clarence.

CHAP. X.



“ Come, fair Hygeia! from thy spring,
“ Thy purest goblet hither bring ;
“ Bright let it sparkle from the fount,
“ That rises on that hallo w’d mount.
“ Where Vigor winds his bugle clear,
“ And hardy huntsmen chase the deer.
“ Bring fairest flow’rs that ever grew
“ On Earth’s soft lap, in morning dew:
“ Flowers that wave on forest sides,
“ Or lave their heads in dimpled tides.
“ Of such a mingled cup prepare,
“ With those thy faithful servants are,
“ Potent to soothe, by wond’rous art,
“ The secret sorrows of the heart!”

FEW things could have happened more fortunate for Clifford at this period, than his becoming domesticated in a circle, of which Colonel Villeroy was the presiding planet.

Charles was exactly at the age when it is most natural to adopt the opinions and manners of one's associates; more particularly when their station in life is superior to our own.

He had been but a few weeks in habits of intimacy with Colonel Villeroy, when he looked up to him as his ruling star, and as a model by which he wished exactly to form his own character.

Nor could he have fixed upon an object more worthy of imitation; for love-inspiring as the person of Colonel Villeroy had once been, and still was, (in the eyes of those who considered the vestiges of recent sufferings but as additional claims to interest) it was but an imperfect index of the soul that governed it! a soul ever triumphant over the infirmities of the body; which, though continually impelled by passions naturally strong, was as constantly subdued by the still stronger

dominion of reason! Nor could the united attacks of perpetual vexation, and dire disease, succeed in conquering his mental energies, though it could deprive his bosom of peace, and cloud his virtuous brow with dejection.

But not for himself did he suffer; had his own interest alone been concerned, the tranquillity of his breast would have continued undisturbed, and the smile of contentment would still have illumined his features.

But the welfare of those nearest and dearest to him, was the object of his constant solicitude; and the wrongs and distresses he saw heaped upon many honest and worthy individuals, filled his aching heart with anguish, and bowed his noble head with the most painful sense of humiliation.

This is easily accounted for, when we

declare, that notwithstanding the costly splendor, and lavish expenditure, which reigned within the mansion of Lord Calisbrook, he was at this very period involved beyond every possibility of extricating himself, or paying the just demands of his creditors, without disposing of the best part of his property.

It consisted of several very valuable estates, which had originally produced a very handsome income, quite sufficient to have enabled Lord Calisbrook to have lived in a style becoming his rank; to have maintained his respectability; and have been of essential benefit to his less prosperous fellow creatures.

But instead of pursuing that meritorious line of conduct, which had distinguished his noble ancestors, he (from the time he came into possession of the title) had preserved a state more becoming a mighty potentate than a simple noble-

man ; and not content with the princely establishment he always kept up (wherever he fixed his residence), he supported a numerous household at each of his estates, which owing to this, and a long course of the most inconsiderate and useless extravagance, were every one of them mortgaged for more than half their value ; while debts amounting to many thousands remained unpaid, and continually augmenting.

Yet Lord Calisbrook with a thoughtlessness (which deserved to be called madness) and an obstinate inattention to the arguments and expostulations of his eldest son, pursued the same unvaried course ; nor would he take one single step towards abridging his expenses.

A seat in parliament secured his person from molestation ; and he was so accustomed to the importunities and supplications of the unfortunate tradesmen, many

of whom his injustice (I had almost said dishonesty) had reduced to extreme distress, that he would pass through a crowd of them, who daily appeared on the steps of his mansion, and sometimes gained access to the hall, without appearing in the slightest degree discomposed.

He had once been in the habit of promising them speedy payment, and of desiring them to apply to his agent, who would, he said, immediately satisfy their demands; but this answer was now so stale and worn-out, and they knew so well how little it meant, that his lordship generally passed them in silence, and appeared alike deaf to their entreaties, or expostulations.

A strong suspicion that his father could not possibly continue to support such a style of living, had occasioned Colonel

Villeroy at an early age, to form the project of entering the army.

He was afterwards convinced of the justice of his suspicions, and with deep concern he reflected that the splendor of his family must speedily set, to rise no more; for with the mere wreck of a once noble property, it would be utterly impossible to support the dignity of the title, should he be destined to perpetuate it: nay, he much doubted if he should even be possessed of the means to enable him to make a comfortable provision for his sister and brother. On which account he was most particularly anxious that Clarence should, through his own exertions, secure himself an independence.

Colonel Villeroy had been driven from his country by his father's creditors; not that they could in any other way annoy him, than by continually applying to him

to interest himself in their behalf, and to represent to his father the distress they were reduced to by the want of those sums that were justly their due.

The Colonel was at that time in the guards, and, consequently, chiefly in town, where he resided at his father's house.

He restricted his own private expences in every way that it was practicable; and indeed he was compelled to do so, unless he had chosen to run in debt, which he resolved never to do, while so totally uncertain of pecuniary resources; for though his father *nominally* made him a very handsome allowance, he never received one farthing of it; therefore to contract his expenditure to the amount of his military pay was his only alternative.

But the blank faces that constantly

surrounded the portal of his father's house, and the importunate relation of wrongs, which he could not refuse to listen to, because he was sensible that they were inflicted by one so nearly allied to him; and whom he wished (if possible) to extenuate, became at length too galling to his feelings to be voluntarily submitted to; and without consulting any of his friends, he exchanged into a regiment then in the West Indies.

No sooner was this business effected than he candidly acquainted his father with the motives which had driven him to take this step, hoping it might make a deep impression on his mind, and occasion him to think seriously.

But in this he was disappointed. Lord Calisbrook told him that he thought him extremely silly for what he had done; that he did not conceive himself at all to blame, because *he* chose voluntarily to

banish himself from his country, and brave all the vicissitudes of war and climate. That if he really believed his family to be so much involved (for his lordship always affected to be ignorant of the state of his affairs) he would have given a much greater proof of his prudence, and of his regard for them, by uniting himself to some rich heiress, whose wealth might have helped to free his estates, and who, for the sake of a title in reversion, would have been happy with her gold to have patched up his broken fortunes.

Lord Calisbrook was, in truth, by no means sorry to get rid of his eldest son, whose constant admonition and advice, was extremely tiresome to him; for this reason he had always avoided him as much as possible, and Clarence had become his favorite; for though Clarence had many amiable and interesting traits in his character, he partook of the same

inconsiderate turn of mind so conspicuous in his father.

They never troubled each other with animadversions on the state of the family affairs; and Clarence believed his brother's representation of them to be exaggerated.

He was much shocked at his resolution of going abroad; and greatly affected by a very serious conversation he had with him prior to his departure, on which occasion he had entreated him to adopt some profession which might secure his future provision; but the impression his words made, though vivid was but transient. But his sister, with unspeakable sorrow, witnessed this sacrifice of her dearest brother. She believed he was hastening to an early grave; and for many months after his departure, she secluded herself entirely; nor till she heard that he had reached the termination of his voyage in health

and safety, could she be prevailed upon to appear in public. Content was a stranger to her bosom; she had been bred up in luxury and splendor, and had ever been accustomed to all the elegancies and superfluities of life, and she fancied the deprivation of them (which she was ever dreading) would make her miserable.

She was conscious that the moment that should deprive her of her father, would witness the downfall of all her consequence in the opinion of the world; for she was convinced that her brother would immediately dispose of every thing he could call his own; should it be necessary, to satisfy the demands of his father's creditors; and should she then be single, she would in all probability be reduced from the station she had till then held in society, and debarred the indulgencies and state she had so long been accustomed to.

Such a prospect was truly humiliating, and such as she found it impossible to reconcile herself to.

Her mind, but for this false pride, this weak ambition, would have been of a superior order; and at this very time she was endeavouring to tolerate the attentions of a man she could not like, because he was possessed of immense wealth, could raise her to the rank of a Countess, and ensure her splendor and affluence for the remainder of her days.

Colonel Villeroy had been three years abroad, when the regiment into which he had exchanged, was ordered to England; and this in all human probability saved his life; for his constitution was so much impaired by a severe attack of the yellow fever, and subsequent debility, that a longer residence in that relaxing climate would doubtless have put a period to his existence.

Even his insensible parent could not suppress a pang, when, on his return, he beheld his altered aspect, and enfeebled frame; but he endeavoured to silence the reproaches of his own heart, by vehemently representing to his son his extreme imprudence, and even cruelty to his family, in having voluntarily sacrificed his health to gratify a mere whim; for thus his lordship termed it.

Colonel Villeroy made no comments upon what had actuated his conduct; neither did he expatiate upon the primary cause of these fatal consequences, which was sufficiently evident to every one who was not wilfully blind to it; and this the streaming tears of his sister, and heavy sighs of his brother, as they both contemplated his faded form, plainly demonstrated.

Colonel Villeroy had not been three

days in town, when this original cause of all his sufferings was most forcibly pressed upon his mind, by the sight of those self-same faces that had haunted him when last he had been an inmate under his father's roof, and who still hovered about his house, urging their rights and necessities.

The very next day the Colonel set off for the residence of his uncle, with the intention of remaining there till he was capable of again serving his country; for the mansion of his father was hateful to him; and the excessive profusion and wanton extravagance that reigned within its walls absolutely shocked him.

His uncle (the only brother of the late Lady Calisbrook) was extremely fond of him, though he had long been at variance with Lord Calisbrook, whom he des-

pised for his unworthy conduct. He had no dislike to Clarence, or his sister, and was on good terms with both, but the Colonel was his favorite.

CHAP. XI.



“ And more he studied books than men ;
“ Of women too, he little ken,
“ But thought them all whate’er they seemed ;
“ Of art or guile he never dreamed :
“ Nor could believe a child in years,
“ Had other thought than childish cares !”

Mr. LETHBRIDGE was of an ancient and respectable family; he possessed an estate of about three thousand a year, upon which he resided, about twenty miles from London, with his only daughter, who had but just attained her sixteenth year.

He had been many years a widower, and during that period had lived in re-

tirement, being naturally of a studious disposition, which rendered seclusion most consonant to his feelings; and while his daughter had continued at the seminary whither he had sent her for her education, he had had nothing to interrupt his favorite pursuits; nor indeed did he relinquish them on her return to him.

She had been at home about a month, which she had spent in solitude, while lamenting the loss of the society of persons of her own age, which she had so long been accustomed to, when the arrival of her two cousins, Colonel Villeroy and Clarence, gave a most seasonable relief to the dullness of the scene.

Cordelia Lethbridge was extremely pretty; and in the form of a woman she displayed all the simplicity of youth.

Her countenance bore an ingenuous

aspect, and she seemed to give utterance to every thought.

The brothers had often seen her during her childhood, and they were surprised at the alteration and improvement that had taken place in her person.

Clarence, who had come down merely to accompany his brother on the short journey, and had intended to return immediately, now thought he could contrive to exist a few days at his uncle's house; and Colonel Villeroy was glad to find so agreeable an addition to the family in the person of Cordelia.

The appearance of Clarence Villeroy, his manners, and youth, were certainly much more calculated to excite the interest of a girl of sixteen, than the serious, and often abstracted deportment of his invalid brother, who was four

years his senior, yet from the very first, Cordelia discovered a strong preference for the elder, to whom she gave her whole attention, while she scarcely regarded the animated Clarence, who finding that his cousin had neither eyes nor ears for any body but the Colonel, remained but a few days in the country, and returned to town, (as has before appeared) on the same day that Charles Clifford arrived at the house of Lord Calisbrook.

Colonel Villeroy had made no mention of his continuing with his uncle for as long as he should continue his own master; for he was sure he should distress his sister extremely by avowing his resolution of not residing with his family; as such a measure must deprive her of his society, which she more than ever valued from having been so long debarred of it.

She fully expected he would very shortly rejoin her in London.

Colonel Villeroy spent the first week of his visit to Mr. Lethbridge very pleasantly.

His uncle desisted from his ordinary employments, and laid aside his books in order to enjoy Villeroy's society; and the soothing attention of the pretty Cordelia, could not but be gratifying to her cousin, who considered her tender solicitude, and ingenuous demonstration of affection, as the result of that regard she naturally experienced for him as her relation.

Mr. Lethbridge thought the same. Had it been otherwise, he would not have rejoiced to hear that his nephew intended to remain some time with him; for though he had a very great regard for him, he was by no means desirous

that his property (which he intended should all be his daughter's, if she married with his consent) should be sacrificed to free those estates which the extravagance of Lord Calisbrook had rendered almost valueless; and had his daughter married Colonel Villeroy, he could have had little doubt that such would have been the consequence.

Mr. Lethbridge had the strictest reliance on his nephew's honor, and he was convinced he might safely admit him as an inmate under the roof with his daughter; whom he considered as too young to have any ideas whatever beyond those of a child.

From this, we may infer, that though Mr. Lethbridge had spent the best part of his time in exploring the mysteries of science, the study of the human heart had not engrossed many of his hours.

He was very glad to perceive that his daughter and nephew seemed so well pleased with each other, and he thought as the latter was amused, he might be permitted to resume his favorite pursuits without appearing rude. Therefore, on the second week of the Colonel's residence at his house, Mr. Lethbridge returned to his old way of passing his mornings, leaving his daughter to entertain her cousin till dinner time, when he rejoined them, and continued with them for the remainder of the day.

Colonel Villeroy was at first very well pleased with this mode of life; the juvenile and playful manner of Cordelia amused and interested him; and when he was tired of her *badinage*, he could take up a book and refresh his mind with something more solid.

But he soon found that Cordelia did

not seem pleased when he attempted to read;—she was a sweet girl!—and the book was generally laid aside when she accused him of selfishness, for excluding her from his amusement. Yet if he read out, she never seemed interested; and the Colonel soon found that she was never easy when his attention was withdrawn from herself.

Villeroy could trifle as agreeably, perhaps, *more* agreeable than most people, at times, and when he was in the humour for it. He perfectly understood

“The science not unwise to trifle well.”

But to be obliged to trifle from morning till night, was to him extremely wearisome. It was like having nothing but whipt syllabub for breakfast, dinner, and supper; and was about as satisfying to his mind, as that would have been to his body!

The second week he passed at his uncle's was much less agreeable than the first; and he determined not to be quite so indulgent to the caprices of his pretty cousin, but to spend at least part of his time as was most congenial to his own taste.

Accordingly, as soon as breakfast was over, he retired to his own room, and employed the hours till near dinner time, in reading, writing, drawing plans of the battles he had been engaged in, or in any other occupation from which he could derive improvement.

On his re-appearance the brow of Cordelia was clouded with displeasure, while she declared that she had been waiting for him the whole morning to walk in the grounds with her; and accused him of having deprived her of her accustomed exercise, and of being the

means of confining her to the house the whole day.

The Colonel professed himself extremely sorry, and said, he had not the least idea that she would be so ceremonious as to stay at home on his account; but he was compelled to finish his speech in a more animated strain, for with consternation he observed the tears swimming in Cordelia's eyes, and he dreaded they would burst forth. He, therefore, hastily assured her he would certainly walk with her the next morning.

This promise brought the recreant smile again upon the features of the tender fair, and the whipt syllabub system was re-commenced with renewed energy, and continued till her father (who really considered her as a child) told her she had played quite long enough, and begged he might have a little rational conversation with his nephew.

The ensuing morning, the Colonel (in conformity to his promise) was obliged to dedicate to his youthful persecutor, who, he reluctantly acknowledged even to himself, betrayed an affection for him passing the love of childhood; and though her manner of evincing it was almost infantine, and he believed sprang from the ingenuousness of her nature, and her ignorance of the impropriety of demonstrating her sentiments, yet he was astonished to observe that in some respects she was altogether as womanly, and by no means unacquainted with the rules of decorum, where others were concerned.

In short, he soon became convinced that a residence at his uncle's would be by no means eligible for him, and he rejoiced that he had not communicated to his family his former plan of continuing there.

About this time he received a letter from his sister, full of reproaches for his having absented himself so long, and urgently entreating his return to town.

He wrote an answer, promising compliance with her request, on conditions that she would consent to live a more re-
life, to which (as has been seen) she gladly consented.

The Colonel had a strong dislike of returning to his father's house; but he could not, under existing circumstances, remain at his uncle's; but he determined, as the spring advanced, to prevail on his sister, to accompany him into the country.

Mr. Lethbridge was much surprised upon being informed by his nephew of his intention to curtail his visit; but was satisfied when the Colonel attributed the sudden change in his re-

solution, to the persuasive letter he had received from his sister.

But Cordelia was not so easily pacified; and, on being left alone with her cousin, she asked if it was possible he really could be in earnest, and if he indeed meant to leave her to mope by herself in that melancholy place?

Villeroy was surprised at the question, and scarcely knew how to answer it, but suddenly recollecting himself he said—

“Is my uncle then going from home?”

“No,” she returned, bursting into tears, “nobody but you could be so ill-natured as to go away from me, and leave me in this dismal hole. But I know very well you are going to be married to some fine lady, and *that* is the reason you are in such a hurry to be off; but you cannot deceive me.”

“ Indeed, my dear cousin, I don’t want to deceive you! I assure you a marriage with any body is the farthest thing from my thoughts; nor, as far as I can foresee, is it all probable that I shall ever enter that state. I cannot unite myself to a woman without fortune, nor will I ever avail myself of the imprudence of one who may be affluent, to join her fate with mine.”

“ Dear cousin, how you talk! imprudence! I am sure I think I—”

Cordelia faltered; and Villeroy suddenly rising, seized the opportunity to say he had began a letter which he must absolutely finish, and immediately withdrew to his apartment.

The next morning he took his departure, which his cousin witnessed with abundance of tears.

Cordelia Lethbridge had been edu-

cated at one of those fashionable seminaries, in the vicinity of the metropolis, which have much the same effect upon young ladies, that a hot bed has upon young plants; and in a state of the utmost *forwardness*, produced by a course of indiscriminate studies, and an intimacy with juvenile companions, with imaginations as vivid as her own, she returned home ripe for conquest; and though a novice in every thing else she was experienced in all the finesse of *la belle passion*, as far as the powers of anticipation could make her so.

But though love and marriage had been the general topic of conversation between herself and school-fellows, the delights attendant on the possession of fine houses, fine carriages, going to every public amusement, and being called your grace, or your ladyship, had not unfrequently been expatiated upon; and the impression made by such discus-

sions on the mind of Cordelia, had induced her, on seeing her cousins (in one of whom she was resolved to find a lover) to fix upon the eldest, whom she considered as the future Lord Callisbrook.

Of the slender resources it was probable would remain to support the consequence of that title, or to furnish the means of those pleasures she had been taught to believe were the greatest in life, she was ignorant; otherwise it is probable her affection for the Colonel would not have evinced itself so unequivocally, and she would have contented herself with merely exacting his homage and attention, to amuse her for the time, without carrying her ideas to any thing more serious.

Had not her views been of *that* nature, she most undoubtedly would

have fixed upon Clarence Villeroy for a temporary flirt, as his manner and person was much more agreeable to her taste than his brother's; and from what she had seen of him, she was convinced she should not have found it such a difficult task to compel him to be particular in his attention to her.

The sudden departure of the Colonel, when she had imagined he intended to have remained some months, mortified her extremely; as it proved that she had not excited that interest in his heart she was so desirous of creating, and which, she had succeeded in persuading herself, she experienced for him.

On his departure, being again left to solitude, and the entertainment of her own thoughts that had long been seeking

for an object to fix themselves upon, she, in the true spirit of romance, resigned herself to the indulgence of her passion; really imagining she was seriously attached.

CHAP XII.

“The brightness of the face of Gaul returned. But his sigh rose at times in the midst of his friends; like blasts that shake their unfrequent wings, after the stormy winds are laid!”

OSSIAN.

MEANTIME Colonel Villeroy enjoyed more comfort under the paternal roof than he had ever before experienced in that residence.

His sister entirely conformed to the way of life most congenial to his feelings; he had a select circle of chosen friends; Charles Clifford interested him, and gradually engaged his esteem; and had the causes which compelled him to

seek egress from the back of the house, (in order to avoid a sight that always unnerved him) been removed, his father become rational, and his brother in a way to make himself independant, he might have been happy! But while these sources of uneasiness existed,—so long as he saw not only *one* Mordecai, but half a dozen, “sitting at the king’s gate,” all this availed him nothing.

In modern, but far less forcible language, under these circumstances, the benign influence of unclouded hope, could not prepare his bosom to admit the seraph Peace, whose halcyon wing sometimes fluttered at his breast, but found not admission.

Nevertheless, the charms of society afforded temporary ease, and his feelings were lulled, while within the vortex of a congenial circle.

In this circle Colonel Villeroy might justly be compared to the sun, round which all the inferior planets revolved; by which they were influenced; and by whose brilliancy they were illumined: for when the brightness of his understanding shone with all its native lustre, *they* were invigorated and animated to display their utimost powers. But when the cloud of dejection eclipsed his glory, when the heavy body of earthly cares, came between them and their benignant orb, they were dark and gloomy, and a sombre aspect instantaneously pervaded all around.

In none was this influence more apparent than in Charles Clifford, who became daily more attached to Colonel Villeroy, and daily more anxious to resemble him.

This laudable ambition could not fail of being highly beneficial to Charles;

the shades in his character gradually faded till they could scarcely be discerned, and only were conspicuous when placed in a particular point of view; or, to drop metaphor, when he appeared in situations most likely to excite his ruling foibles, which certainly were not of a very inveterate or disgusting nature.

His matrimonial speculation had nearly died away on his mind, and he resolved at least to take time to consider of it.

While he became indifferent on this point, he retained a lively remembrance of Augusta; and in his letters to Mr. Beryl, he never failed to enquire after her, and her mother; but Mr. Beryl did not punctually reply to his letters; Charles had only heard once from him since he had been in town, and he had not then mentioned the Sebrights.

Colonel Villeroy had been about two months in London, in the course of which he had, to his great surprise, received several most affectionate letters from Cordelia Lethbridge, which he had replied to, at his leisure, in *friendly* terms; when the arrival of a very particular friend of his, whom he had invited to pay him a visit, furnished a most agreeable addition to the family party.

Captain Stanhope had a company in the regiment Colonel Villeroy had belonged to.

He was his chosen intimate, and was worthy to be so.

To a majestic figure, was added a countenance peculiarly interesting, though not strictly handsome. His manners were elegant, mild, and conciliating; he was unobtrusive, though

not diffident; cheerful, but not boisterous.

————— “A mild, majestic grace,
Beam'd from his eye, and open'd in his face.”

His father was the offspring of a younger branch of a noble family; from which he inherited nothing but the blood; which, notwithstanding its superiority, he found subjected those whose veins it flowed through, to as many natural infirmities, as their less distinguished fellow creatures, and rendered them no less alive to the necessities of nature, to supply which active exertion was required; and through the interest of his friends, Mr. Stanhope obtained a place under government, which enabled him to support his wife and two daughters genteelly.

From the same source, his son had been presented with a commission, and

was now eldest captain in the regiment he belonged to.

The situation Mr. Stanhope filled only required his personal attendance for about two months in the year; the remainder of his time he spent with his family, at a sweet country residence on the coast of Hampshire.

His son had obtained leave of absence for the winter; and having past some weeks at home, he accepted an invitation which had often been pressed; to visit Colonel Villeroy, for whom he felt the affection of a brother.

Captain Stanhope was every way calculated to form a member of the enlightened *coterie*, which nevertheless was not so select as it had been a short time before; for, from peculiar circumstances, a gentleman had gained access to it, who certainly possessed but a very limited pro-

portion of those brilliant qualifications which would have entitled him to be admitted.

This was no less a person than the Earl of Clyne, the professed suitor of Miss Villeroy; who, though she had not absolutely accepted him, permitted his visits in the hope of discovering in him some latent talent, or amiable quality of the heart, that might assist in reconciling her to the idea of becoming his wife.

Hitherto she had been unsuccessful in this research; and all that she had been able to ascertain decisively was, that his lordship's head was formed of most impenetrable materials; and that if any thing ever had forced its way into it (which there seemed much room to doubt) the efforts it had made to gain admission, had been so great as to incapacitate it from the farther exertion of

coming forth again; and it lay quietly hid in the cavities of his noble brain, wholly exhausted with the fatigue it had undergone in surmounting the many obstacles that had obstructed its progress in its way there.

His lordship was in fact one of those persons of whom it might be said in the words of *Madame La Marquise du Deffend*,—" *Ce sont les impuissant qui doivent l'aimer, ce sont les sourds qui doivent l'entendre.*"

But his lordship was wealthy, his person not unpleasant, and scarcely any female would have thought of rejecting him, at least, so Miss Villeroy believed.

How then could she, who beheld ruin almost too near to be called in perspective, and who had no prior attachment,

decide on refusing him, with any shadow of prudence?

Perhaps her motive for even tolerating his idea, should more justly be ascribed to ambition! For surely the prudence of wisdom would rather have prompted her to endeavour to reconcile herself to the prospect of poverty, to resolve on supporting it with religious resignation, or stimulated exertions to ward it off, than have impelled her to rush into a union with a being whose society would render her future existence burthensome to her; and who would embitter every social joy by betraying feelings and sentiments in exact opposition to her own.

“Art thou ambitious? Why then make the worm
“Thine equal? Runs thy taste of pleasure high?
“Why patronize such death of ev’ry joy?
“Charm riches? Why chuse begg’ry in the grave,
“Of ev’ry hope a bankrupt! and for ever?*

* Young.

Colonel Villeroy was no advocate for Lord Clyne; he said not one word either in his favor or against him, to his sister, for on a subject of such importance he resolved to be silent.

It was not in his power to ensure to his sister a future provision, such as would be desirable for her; if it *had* been he would no doubt have dissuaded her from forming a connection with a being so uncongenial to her; but as it *was*, he thought it best to leave her to act for herself. Lord Clyne's character was unimpeached, and an union with him would secure her future splendour and consequence.

This, Colonel Villeroy could not promise his sister; and if, through his interference, she had been tempted to reject Lord Clyne, she might, when the time should arrive that would deprive her of the luxuries she had been ever

accustomed to, reproach him in her heart for having influenced her to forego the golden bait which was now held out to her.

Lord Calisbrook was not quite so punctilious on this head; but freely gave his opinion and advice; and discovered more energy on this occasion than he had ever before displayed, and was vehement in the cause of Lord Clyne.

The subject that now occupied Miss Villeroy's mind, did not tend to disperse the cloud on her brow, which increased, and the cast of discontent was succeeded by the gloom of dejection.

At length, after many a struggle, a reluctant consent was drawn from her, by the importunities of her father, who

immediately acquainted Lord Clyne with her decision.

This communication had been made on the very day of Captain Stanhope's arrival in town; and on that evening my Lord Clyne was received as the destined husband of Miss Ville-roy.

His lordship was as animated upon the occasion as his nature would permit him to be; Miss Villeroy in vain endeavoured to behave towards him with that complacency he had a right to expect, and pleading indisposition she retired at an early hour.

The celebration of her nuptials was fixed for that day month, and having once given her consent, she offered no objection to this arrangement.

Yet as the days passed over, each

bringing nearer the period of her sacrifice, (for such in truth it was) a fearful horror, at the step she was about to take, pervaded her mind: her repugnance to it every moment increased; and she would have given worlds to have retracted her promise; but it was now too late, and impressed with this conviction, the deepest melancholy took possession of her.

Colonel Villeroy was shocked beyond expression at his sister's demeanour, which he could not but ascribe to the true cause.

Captain Stanhope, though entirely ignorant of the source of Miss Villeroy's evident unhappiness, (for in Lord Clyne he never discovered an accepted lover) was grieved to perceive so young, and lovely a woman, oppressed by such a weight of mental misery; and endea-

youred as far as was in his power, to draw her attention from the contemplation of her woes.

As the particular friend of her favorite brother, she had conducted herself towards him, from the very first, with peculiar graciousness, and he not unfrequently had the pleasure of observing, that he had succeeded in interesting her; for his insinuating manners, and the elegant turn of mind his conversation discovered, were exactly calculated to soothe a disturbed spirit, and charm away the consciousness of its wretchedness.

But though this charm seldom failed to operate in the absence of Lord Clyne, his presence always dissolved it.

Clarence Villeroy was at this time out of town, having set out with the intention of joining some old friends and

fellow collegians, who still remained at the university at Cambridge, and with whom he intended spending a short time, chiefly for the sake of novelty.

CHAP. XIII.



“My noble brother in his powerful self,
“So strong in virtue stands, he thinks full surely
“The daughter of his sire no weakness hath;
“And wists not how a simple heart must struggle
“To be what it would be,—what it must be,—
“Aye, and, so aid me, Heaven! what it shall be.”

JOANNA BAILLIE.

COLONEL VILLEROY with dismay watched the hourly augmenting misery of his sister; and at length felt that he could no longer exonerate himself in remaining silent, and permitting her to make a sacrifice which appeared to cost her so much, without, at least, expostulating with her, on the rashness of her determination.

Accordingly, he seized an early opportunity of entering upon the subject; and entreating her to inform him from whence arose her so visible unhappiness, and if it originated in the prospect of her marriage with Lord Clyne; Miss Villeroy instantly betrayed the strongest perturbation, while the tears streamed in torrents from her eyes; as soon as she could speak she exclaimed that she *must* marry Lord Clyne; that she was resolved upon it, for that after the promise she had given she could not retract.

“Do you wish to retract?” cried her brother.

“I never *will*,” she returned; “I have consented to be his, and I have no one to blame but myself; I must take the consequences. Perhaps I may not mind it so much when it is once irrevocable!” she shuddered.

“*Perhaps!*” echoed the Colonel; “and is it possible you can resolve on forming an irrevocable union, while you

admit but a faint doubt of its making you miserable? This is absolute madness! You must not marry Lord Clyne. I am aware that your honor is concerned in this business, and the only way in which you can extricate yourself from the dilemma is by throwing yourself entirely on the generosity of his lordship, and candidly acknowledging your strong repugnance to entering the marriage state; and utter inability to reconcile yourself to the thought of an union with any body, in your present state of mind."

Miss Villeroy sighed heavily, but obstinately persisted in declaring it to be her unalterable resolution to espouse Lord Clyne.

"What am I to look forward to?" she cried; starting with a degree of horror. "At my father's death we shall all be beggars! What will then become of me, if I should now reject the affluence and splendor that solicit my

acceptance. I should be a poor neglected forlorn being! despised by those who had been accustomed to look up to me! and those who noticed me, conceiving it a charity and condescension. No; I never will be reduced to such a humiliating state! Say no more, Ferdinand! I am resolved to marry Lord Clyne!"

Villeroy, shocked and distressed beyond measure at his sister's adherence to a determination which he was convinced, involved her future happiness, exhausted every argument to dissuade her from it, and represented in lively colours, and forcible language, the superior misery attendant on a marriage with an object of dislike, to all the chain of evils poverty could bring with it; but she only answered him with her tears; and this conversation, which took place about a week after she had consented to give her hand to Lord

Clyne, concluded by her still declaring she was resolved to abide by her promise; and her brother determined to say no more on the subject.

The preparations for the approaching nuptials were expedited as much as possible.

Lord Calisbrook talked very pompously of what his daughter would possess at his demise, but averred that it would not be convenient to him to retrench his present income, by giving her a suitable portion on her marriage.

Lord Clyne was one of the richest noblemen in England; avarice could not be numbered among his faults; he loved Miss Villeroy as much as he could love any thing; and he made a very handsome settlement on his future bride, without at all regarding her deficiency of pecuniary attractions.

Lord Calisbrook was alarmed lest the extreme gloominess and reserve of his daughter should surprise and disgust her noble lover, and occasion him to imagine her averse to the union; he therefore took an opportunity of observing to him, that Miss Villeroy had always been of a very reflective turn, and that the solemn engagement she was about to form, naturally impressed her mind with a degree of seriousness which merely owed its origin to the high sense she entertained of the duties attendant on the situation she was now to enter.

Lord Clyne was not gifted with any extraordinary portion of penetration, and as the lady had consented to become his wife, he saw no reason to mistrust the strength of her regard for him. She had at no time treated him with much complacency, he therefore did not expect it from her. He had heard it asserted by many that she was extremely

clever and extremely wise, two qualifications for which his lordship was not remarkable, and of this he was not entirely unconscious, and felt highly flattered that a woman of such superior mental endowments would accept him on any terms.

The days wore away rapidly to those who looked forward with sorrowful regret to the period that was to decide the fate of Miss Villeroy. A week now only intervened; and during that time she confined herself almost entirely to her apartments, under pretence of having arrangements to make, preparatory to her change of abode, and the journey she was to take; as immediately after the ceremony, the bride and bridegroom were to set off for an estate which the latter possessed about a hundred miles from the capital.

Clarence Villeroy wrote to excuse himself from being present at his sister's wedding; at the same time saying he

should remain in the country some weeks longer. His brother did not think this extraordinary, as he believed Clarence was averse to witnessing a ceremony which he probably considered as a sacrifice.

The evening parties had for some time been entirely given up, for Colonel Villeroy did not feel his spirits equal to supporting the presence of any but his dearest friends. Captain Stanhope and Charles Clifford were his constant companions, but a melancholy hung over the trio. The Colonel had now mentioned his sister's approaching marriage; indeed it was now pretty generally known. The embarrassed circumstances of Lord Calisbrook had long ceased to be a secret to the public, and was become a theme almost too stale to form the subject of conversation; yet when it was known that Miss Villeroy had consented to give her hand to Lord Clyne, few hesitated to as-

cribe her acceptance of him to the true cause.

Neither could Captain Stanhope or Charles (who now, through the whispers of some of his new acquaintance, had attained a pretty just idea of the state of his patron's affairs) doubt, for one moment, that she was devoting herself at the shrine of ambition..

Charles could now account for the dejection of his amiable friend, in whose feelings both he and Stanhope too sincerely sympathized to be able to feel happy; nor could they help experiencing a lively commiseration for Miss Villeroy, whose conduct and demeanour so plainly evinced her repugnance to the union.

The eve preceding the dreaded morn, at length arrived. Lord Clyne had called during the day, but had received an apology from Lord Calisbrook, for his

daughter's not appearing, with an assurance that she would be punctual to the hour appointed for the celebration of the marriage; which was to be performed by special licence in the saloon of his own mansion.

CHAP. XIV.



“ Backward I turn, and when I view the past,
“ As on a livid lake I turn my eyes,
“ Gloomy, but troubled by no dangerous blast,
“ The dull and hazy space behind me lies :
“ Before me spreads a drear and wintry waste,
“ And deeps unsounded and o’erclouding skies ;
“ To the bleak past most gladly would I fly,
“ From storms that threat in dire futurity.”

BLAND.

COLONEL VILLEROY retired unusually early to bed, as did also his two companions, Stanhope and Clifford.

On reaching his apartment, Villeroy dismissed his servant, and seating himself, he continued ruminating for some time on the melancholy prospects of his

sister, and on what her feelings at that moment, in all probability were.

He lamented the infatuation which drove her thus rashly to rush upon one evil in order to avoid another of not half its magnitude; for he felt confident that the possession of pomp and splendor was not sufficient to constitute her happiness, and that in an union with Lord Clyne, she must for ever be debarred the delights of a congenial intercourse.

The clock struck one, while he was still pursuing this unpleasant train of thought.

Shortly after he distinctly heard the door of his sister's apartment opened, and quick footsteps advancing along the gallery. This was immediately followed by a hurried, but gentle tap at his chamber door. On his giving permission to enter, it was opened by his sister, who

with uneven steps came forward, and throwing herself upon the nearest seat, she covered her face with her hands, and uttered the most deep and convulsive sobs.

Colonel Villeroy started up, and approached her in extreme alarm; and taking her in his arms, he entreated her to explain the cause of her sudden appearance; but it was long ere she could articulate; at length, she indistinctly pronounced—

“*I cannot* marry him!” and continued, “O never, never, can I swear before God to love and obey him! Ever since the wretched hour that I was induced to give my consent, I have been endeavouring by every possible argument to reconcile myself to the thoughts of this hated alliance; but my repugnance has increased every hour, and now that the period is so near, I regard it

with awful horror; and the being I am expected to love, with perfect antipathy! All the miseries of poverty and dependence now appear trifling compared to the wretchedness of becoming his wife. I have struggled day and night to overcome this sensation, and at length horror-struck with the thought that my destiny would in the course of a few hours be irrevocably fixed, I flew to you. O, my brother! Yet what can you do for me? What will become of me? O! that I had listened to you before, while the dreadful moment was yet at a distance!"

She paused; her frame was agitated almost to hysterics.

"Compose yourself, my dear, dear sister," cried Villeroy; "thank Heaven it is not yet too late! Never shall you marry this man! I am resolved upon it, let the consequence be what it may!"

“ O! how is it possible I can disappoint him at this late period? Under what plea can I suddenly, and at such a time, break off an engagement I was not *forced* into? Perhaps he may insist upon his claims! O what am I to do; the whole world will condemn me?”

“ Talk not of the *world*! What compensation will it make you for the sacrifice of your happiness to its opinion? The only consideration is how to spare Lord Clyne’s feelings, and to withdraw yourself from this connection (if possible) with honor.”

Alas! it is impossible!”

“ No, I hope not; for whether is it more honorable to impose upon a man, and make him believe that you marry him because you love him, when in reality you merely ally yourself to him in order to secure an establishment, or candidly to acknowledge, even at the last moment, that you cannot bring yourself to share his fortune, when you find it

impossible to give him your heart? A man of real delicacy would be better pleased that this declaration should be made even at the altar, than that he should receive to his arms a woman who did not, and never could love him. But this is certainly a most delicate point, and not easy to decide on, every one will judge according to their own feelings; those of Lord Clyne I hope and trust are not very acute; yet at the very moment when he was in full expectation of the fruition of his hopes, he cannot fail to feel his disappointment most sensibly."

"O, I cannot bear to think of it! If he really loves me, what dreadful anguish shall I cause him! But surely he is incapable of experiencing that refined and animated affection which would make him feel in full force the unworthiness of my conduct. O! if I thought he really would endure such keen regret for my loss, I would rather sacrifice my-

self to him, than inflict such torture upon any body !”

Colonel Villeroy was surprised to hear his sister speak in such terms of a passion, the nature of which he believed her to be totally unacquainted with, for he had never known her evince a partiality for any one, and he was convinced that had a prepossession occupied her heart at the time Lord Clyne had pressed his suit, she never would have permitted things to have gone so far.

He now entreated her to retire, and endeavor to compose herself, saying he would dedicate the night to reflecting on the best measures to be pursued to extricate her from her embarrassment, and at the same time spare the feelings of Lord Clyne.

But in order to gain time, and that the whole weight of his disappointment

should not fall on him at once, it would be expedient, as early as possible in the morning, to dispatch a note to his lordship, to inform him that she had been taken extremely unwell during the night, and was so much indisposed as to render it impossible the ceremony could take place on that day.

The same excuse would account for its being deferred for some time, when Villeroy trusted they might be enabled to dissolve the connection without noise or publicity.

With a lightened heart, though still labouring under various causes of disquietude, Miss Villeroy returned to her chamber, which for some weeks past had echoed only with the sigh of misery, or the sob of an oppressed heart.

Great had been the struggle between ambition, and—will the reader be asto-

nished when I add—*love!* or does he already suspect that the influence of that passion had gradually chased the empty visions of splendor from the breast of Miss Villeroy, and discovered to her that the real joys of life did consist in pomp and magnificence? Such was in fact the case. The amiable deportment, and winning gentleness of Captain Stanhope, had awakened a sentiment in her heart she had till then been a stranger to.

This prepossession was merely in its infancy at the time her brother had spoken to her concerning her engagement with Lord Clyne, at the same time advising her to dissolve it; but she was sensible of the partiality that existed in her breast, and provoked that she should experience it for a person whose rank in life (independent of her entanglement with Lord Clyne) would have rendered it the height of imprudence in her to encourage any thoughts of him;

she resolved to get the better of such weakness, and fix her mind on her approaching nuptials, which she was more than ever determined upon; but this resolution though easily made, was most difficult to be kept, for

“He who stems a stream with sand,

“And fetters flame with flaxen band,

“Has yet a harder task to prove,

“By firm resolve to conquer love.”*

With the weakness characteristic of the passion which daily increased, Miss Villeroy had allowed herself the gratification of listening to Captain Stanhope's interesting conversation, erroneously imagining that by thus braving the danger, she should overcome it. But of the fallacy of this persuasion she was too late convinced, and secluding herself entirely, she resigned herself to the despair that every day augmented. Not one moment would she now have hesitated to

* Walter Scot.

break off her connection with Lord Clyne; but on what plea could she effect this even through the interference of her brother, the Colonel, after having so obstinately persisted against his advice, in her resolution to espouse his lordship? The real cause of this sudden change it was impossible she could confess, and she continued a prey to the most torturing sensations and the keenest anguish, unable to decide how to act till the very eve of the day fixed on for her marriage, when, rendered desperate by the near approach of her fate, she suddenly formed the resolution of flying to her brother, and imparting to him the nature of her feelings, at least as far as regarded Lord Clyne.

CHAP. XV.



“ Menons bien ce project ; la fourbe sera fine
“ S’il faut qu’ elle succede ainsi que l’imagine.”

MOLIERE.

AT a very early hour Colonel Villeroy sent a note, such as he had projected, to Lord Clyne, in which he also informed him that he would wait upon him in the course of a few hours, as he was desirous of conversing with him on a subject most interesting to them both.

As soon as Miss Villeroy heard that her father was stirring, she sent a message to him, to inform him, that she was so much indisposed it was impossible her marriage could take place on that day.

She, of course, did not quit her chamber.

A physician was immediately called in, whose attendance she was obliged to submit to; indeed it was not entirely superfluous, for the agitation of mind she had undergone, and the unhappiness she had so long endured, had considerably impaired her health, and affected a constitution not naturally strong.

When Colonel Villeroy joined his two friends at breakfast, they anxiously enquired for Miss Villeroy, a report of whose indisposition they had already heard.

The Colonel replied that it was not of a dangerous nature.

“Is the marriage then to take place to-day?” asked Stanhope.

“No, nor *ever*! if I can possibly prevent it!” cried Villeroy with animation.

My sister shall never sacrifice herself for the benefit of her family."

To this motive Colonel Villeroy chose to ascribe his sister's resolution of accepting Lord Clyne, as it certainly was a more amiable one than the prospect of self aggrandisement, and doubtless had in some measure influenced her decision.

Clifford frankly expressed his atisfaction, and declared he was delighted to hear there was a chance of this union not taking place. Captain Stanhope was silent.

Shortly after breakfast Villeroy repaired to the residence of Lord Clyne, and was received by his lordship with expressions of sorrow and disappointment at the unpleasant cause which had delayed his nuptials.

He expressed himself with somewhat more animation than he was accustomed to speak in ordinary, and begged to know if Miss Villeroy's disorder was of a nature likely to increase?

Colonel Villeroy replied, that he feared it was, unless the cause from which it sprang could be removed. He continued—

“Nothing can be more unpleasant than the business I am now obliged to enter upon. Yet, judging by my own feelings, I cannot doubt that your lordship would prefer a candid avowal of the truth. I scarcely think it possible your penetration could have failed to discover the very evident uneasiness my sister has betrayed from the period she consented, through my father's persuasions, to think seriously on the subject of matrimony. Her utmost endeavours to reconcile herself to the thoughts of it, have failed, and the

struggle she has made to overcome her disinclination to entering the married state, has occasioned the illness she now labours under. 'This confession she has at length made, and I felt myself in honor called upon to acquaint you with the real state of the case; and though we must all most deeply lament that things have gone so far, yet I think a man of your lordship's delicacy and understanding, would greatly prefer giving up all thought of this marriage, to even consenting to it after what I have informed you of."

Colonel Villeroy paused—his lordship looked confounded, and was quite at a loss how to reply.

He felt no less angry than disappointed; but the Colonel's allusion to his *understanding* and *delicacy*, in some measure soothed his feelings. But he knew not how he ought to conduct himself un-

der such circumstances, and for some moments he maintained a sullen silence.

Villeroy, anxious to terminate this unpleasant interview, and also to give Lord Clyne time to arrange his ideas, which he perceived were at present benumbed by consternation, added as he rose from his seat—

“I will leave your lordship to reflect on what I have said, and if you will permit me, I will call in the course of the evening, and converse farther with you on this subject.”

“Very well, Sir,” said the Earl, ringing the bell; “I must own the purport of your words have so amazed me, I scarcely know where I am.”

No sooner had Colonel Villeroy left him, than he summoned his confidential friend and adviser.

This was a *hanger-on* of his lordship's; a man reduced in fortune by his own idleness and extravagance; his name was Banes.

He had with very little difficulty contrived to worm himself into his lordship's favor, and had succeeded so well in his design, that he now lived at his table, and had an apartment in his house.

This man had been greatly annoyed by the Earl's resolution to marry, as he conceived that event would for ever put an end to his dominion; and nothing could have been more gratifying to him than the intelligence he received on obeying his patron's summons.

His lordship recounted to him without reserve, what had passed between Colonel Villeroy and himself; and asked his

advice how to act under such perplexing circumstances.

Banes immediately evinced the strongest resentment at the unworthy manner in which his noble friend had been treated, and counselled him to write a letter to Miss Villeroy, resigning all pretensions to her, and declaring that after what had passed, no consideration should induce him to form the connection he had once meditated.

“ But what will the world say?” cried Lord Clyne; “ it was universally known that I was on the point of marriage! even the day was fixed! I shall be laughed at, and every one will say I have been made a fool of!”

“ No, no, that can easily be avoided! Let it be imagined that the rejection came from *your* side; and that on account of Lord Calisbrook’s refusing to give his

daughter a suitable dower, you resolved to decline the connection."

"But then people will say I acted like a rascal; besides, you know that will not be *true*."

"Your lordship is very much mistaken as to what people will say. Take my word for it, it will be allowed that you acted like a very wise man; while, on the contrary, if you had married her, every one would have condemned you for suffering yourself to be *taken in*. As to the account not being *true*, there is no occasion for your asserting it to be so; of course, delicacy would prevent your speaking at all on the subject. *I* will take care it shall be circulated so as to make every one believe just what we wish; and rest assured your lordship's prudence and undersanding will rise considerably in the estimation of the world, by its being supposed that you declined marrying a girl who had nothing but a person to recomend her."

This language was extremely soothing to the feelings of the Earl, who not being an adept at his pen, requested Banes to dictate the contents of the letter, he was now resolved to write to Miss Villeroy. It was couched in terms by no means gratifying to that young lady's vanity, but as it released her from her engagement, it was a source of extreme satisfaction to her. The receipt of this letter during the morning, prevented the necessity of Colonel Villeroy's again waiting on Lord Clyne on this business.

Lord Calisbrook, on being made acquainted with the particulars of his daughter's conduct, was, at first, extremely enraged, but his disposition was too volatile and inconsistent to retain any impression long, and his resentment soon died away. Those who were unacquainted with the real cause that had prevented the celebration of the marriage on the day appointed, concluded it was

deferred on account of Miss Villeroy's illness; but as under these circumstances, she could not appear abroad without exciting comments, Colonel Villeroy proposed that they should leave town, and repair to the sea side, where, as the spring was now advancing, Miss Villeroy might, in a short time, have the benefit of bathing, nor appear again in the great world, till the curiosity she was at present likely to excite, should have subsided.

CHAP. XVI.



“ Ah! the goodly creature!

“ How fair she is! how winning! See that form,

“ Those limbs, beneath their foldy vestments moving,

“ As tho’ in mountain clouds they robed were,

“ And music of the air their motion measured.”

JOANNA BAILLIE.

THE period for which Captain Stanhope obtained leave of absence was now expired, and he rejoined his regiment.

Miss Villeroy very gladly agreed to her brother’s plan of repairing to a watering place; and on being requested by him to decide on where it should be, she im-

mediately fixed upon Brighthelmstone.

Villeroy was surprised that she should not rather have preferred a more retired place; but on second thoughts he offered no objection, as he recollected that the regiment he had belonged to was stationed at Brighton, and he should have the satisfaction of enjoying the society of some of his old friends. Captain Stanhope among the number.

Lord Calisbrook was very well content with this arrangement, as he was not required to be of the party, and readily consented that Charles Clifford should join it.

His lordship always rejoiced at any thing that removed his eldest son (of whom he stood in some awe) to a distance from him. He promised to answer any bills he might draw upon him while

absent; and insisted on his daughter's having one of the carriages, a set of horses, &c. to attend her.

Colonel Villeroy did not oppose this, as he knew had he declined taking them, they would only have remained at home idle, and have been equally expensive, without being of any use.

He placed no reliance on his father's promise of answering his bills; he possessed a few hundred pounds prize money, the hard earnings of his military conquests, and on this he depended in case of any pecuniary exigency.

The evening previous to the day they had appointed for leaving town, they were surprised by the arrival of Clarence, whom they had not expected to see for some time longer.

He accounted in no other way for his sudden appearance, than by saying he had grown tired of the country; yet on hearing that they were on the eve of a journey to Brighton, he, with his accustomed restlessness, and passion for novelty, immediately determined on being of the party.

The Colonel enquired if he had seen their uncle, Mr. Lethbridge, during his absence, for he knew he must have passed near his residence. Clarence replied in the affirmative, adding, that he had left both him and his daughter very well.

Early the ensuing morning Colonel Villeroy, his sister, brother, and Charles, attended by a convenient number of domestics, set off for Brighton, where they arrived to a late dinner.

The Colonel had previously written to

Captain Stanhope, requesting him to procure for them a ready furnished house, to which they were driven, having encountered Stanhope at the entrance of the town.

They found a comfortable dinner provided for them by his orders, and of which he partook.

Though it was little more than a week since he had seen Miss Villeroy, he could observe a great alteration in her; her brow was no longer contracted by the painful cast of her reflections; and her manner evinced a wish to please; in which, while stimulated by that desire, she could not fail of succeeding.

The next day most of the officers who had served under Colonel Villeroy, waited upon him to pay their respects.

He shortly after invited them all to dine, for he thought it incumbent on him so to do; but his sister did not preside at the table, as he did not choose to introduce her to the whole of them indiscriminately.

At a favorable opportunity he presented three or four of the most select, whom he knew would form an agreeable addition to their society.

They found that Brighton was by no means so empty as watering places in general are, out of the season, for several families of distinction resided there best part of the year, and the Villeroy party soon got into a very pleasant line of acquaintance.

They had passed a month most agreeably, when Captain Stanhope informed his friends that he should have the pleasure of introducing his youngest sister to

them. A Mrs. Pelham, a friend and neighbour of his family, was coming to Brighton, and Virginia Stanhope was to accompany her on the excursion.

The expectations the Villeroys had formed respecting this young lady were in no way disappointed on beholding her.

To the same amiable and conciliating manner that distinguished her brother, was added a most animating spirit of vivacity, and seldom could there have been seen so interesting an assemblage of features.

A good complexion, and elegant figure, completed Virginia Stanhope, such, as had she but been possessed of a large fortune, would have established her claim to being a first rate belle, and she would probably have been esteemed a perfect beauty.

As it *was*, none but the most discriminating found out that she *was* beautiful; notwithstanding she possessed that rare description of personal charms of which it is impossible to give a juster idea than is conveyed in the words of the president Henault, in his unique and expressive representation of Madame de Flamarens; in the place of whose name I shall take the liberty of substituting that of the person of whom I wish to give the reader the most exact conception.

“ Virginia a le visage le plus touchant. et le plus modeste qui fut jamais; c’est une genre de beauté que la nature n’attrape qu’une fois; il y a dans ses traits quelque chose de rare et de mystérieux, qui aurait fait dire dans les temps fabuleux, qu’une immortelle, sous cette forme, ne s’était pas assez déguisée.”

Virginia had spent the chief part of

her time in retirement, where a most correct and judicious education had fitted both herself and sister (who still remained with her parents) for any situation in life they might be destined to appear in.

The lady under whose protection Virginia now was, was of great respectability, and some consequence. She was a widow, advanced in years, and possessed of a large property.

Mr. Stanhope's residence was in the vicinity of her country seat; and she had always noticed and patronized his family; and when in the country one or the other of his daughters was always with her.

Mrs. Pelham's health was much impaired; she was particularly subject to nervous attacks, and had repaired to

Brighton for the benefit of change of air, and sea bathing.

The Villeroys were the first persons who paid their respects to Mrs. Pelham, and her young friend, and a mutual prepossession was the result of the very first visit, which Mrs. Pelham and Miss Stanhope lost no time in returning, and a rapid intimacy, which required not Captain Stanhope's exertions to promote it, ensued between the families. Miss Villeroy had never before met with a female so congenial to her as was Virginia; and they shortly became almost inseparable. Clarence Villeroy could not but behold Virginia with admiration, but it did not evince itself by any particular demonstration; and his brother strongly suspected that he had some attachment or entanglement in another quarter, as he had frequently since his return to his family retired to write letters, which he had not been in the habit of doing twice

in a year before, having but few correspondents; and the Colonel also observed that whenever he questioned him respecting the places he had visited during his absence, he gave him evasive and unsatisfactory answers.

CHAP. XVII.

“ For not more close when dazzling lightning’s glare,
“ Follows the thunder thro’ the troubled air,
“ Than in this scene of life a cloud of woes
“ Bursts on our transient joys, and banishes repose.”

HODGSON.

NO change was produced in the heart of Charles Clifford by his acquaintance with Miss Stanhope; and he was surprised on tracing the general train of his thoughts, to find how frequently, and with what vivacity, the image of Augusta Sebright recurred to his imagination, (notwithstanding the length of time that had elapsed since he had beheld her) and how superior was the interest she had

excited in his heart to that produced by any other of her sex.

Whether Colonel Villeroy could, or could not, behold unsubdued the charms of Virginia, and the contemplation of her more solid attractions, which a frequent intercourse enabled him to indulge, time will discover.

He was not of a disposition to be overcome and enslaved upon a superficial knowledge of the qualities of the head and heart; he even *hoped* that a conviction of their superior qualifications would fail to excite a passion in his breast, which, under his present circumstances, could only be productive of anxiety and wretchedness. Indeed his consciousness of this, was a strong repellant against attacks of that nature.

This theme forcibly recalls to mind, an observation of a late writer,* no less es-

timable as a man, than admirable as a scholar.

“ Love was given us by the Author of our Being as the reward of virtue, and solace of care; but the base and sordid form of *artificial* (which I oppose to natural) society in which we live, have encircled that heavenly rose with so many thorns, that the wealthy alone can gather it with prudence.”

About this time Charles received a letter from Mr. Beryl.

The first page contained nothing of interest; but towards the conclusion it ran as follows:—“ The marriage that has been so long talked of in the Sebright family, has at length taken place. It is almost needless to say Mr. Temple is the bridegroom. He is one of the richest men in the county, and has made Augusta

* Sir William Jones.

completely independant; at which I greatly rejoice as she is most worthy of her prosperity, and the situation she is now raised to. The marriage was solemnized about a week ago; she, her mother, and the bridegroom, set out on a tour southward."

Charles turned sick, for the first time in his life, while perusing these lines, and the most painful throbs agitated his heart, while a universal aching seized his limbs.

Again he read the dreadful sentence, and then with the petulant violence of one who is conscious he has nobody to blame but himself, he struck his forehead, and with boyish weakness burst into tears!

He had no idea till this moment of the firm hold Augusta had obtained of his heart; and he now felt sensible that a la-

tent anticipation of what *might* occur upon his next visit to Mr. Beryl, had been nurtured in his imagination, where had existed an air-formed vision of future happiness.

He paced his chamber in the utmost disorder ; but fearful that his servant (or some of his male friends, who were in the habit of running up to his room when they could not find him below) might surprise him, he hastened from his apartment, resolved to repair to the sea shore, and there, wandering miles from the town, indulge the first transport of his despair.

He had scarcely quitted the house when he encountered Miss Villeroy, whom he probably would have passed without perceiving, had she not addressed him.

He answered in a hurried, indistinct

manner ; and observing that he was much disturbed, she immediately wished him good morning, and entered the house.

Charles proceeded onward with velocity, when his progress was again arrested by some one exclaiming,

“ Mr. Clifford! how do you do? I am very glad to see you.”

Charles looked up—his consternation may better be imagined than described, when he beheld Mr. Temple, with Augusta and her mother, hanging on either arm.

Mr. Temple who had accosted him, rejoicing in a *rencontre* with a young man for whom he felt some degree of regard, vainly awaited a demonstration of mutual satisfaction, for not even a civil answer was he destined to receive.

Charles started back with an aspect of horror and affright; and vainly attempting to recover himself, he had just sufficient recollection to touch his hat, when he rushed by, and was speedily out of sight.

Such behaviour in a person who had once been on so intimate a footing with them, amazed, and highly offended the ladies.

The elder concluded that he was ignorant of the marriage that had lately taken place, and was probably ashamed to acknowledge any acquaintance with persons he might conceive so very inferior to those people of rank with whom he was now in some measure connected.

The younger was partly of the same opinion, but she was more inclined to believe his extreme disorder was the result of what had passed between him and

the lady, with whom he had been parleying; for her eyes had been fixed on him while Miss Villeroy had been speaking to him; the hurried manner in which he quitted her, and his perturbed looks, encouraged this suspicion, and she concluded that his apparent dismay had been increased by beholding her at the very moment that his whole heart was occupied by another.

Mr. Temple was totally at a loss to account for Clifford's strange conduct; and openly expressed his astonishment, in which the ladies confessed they participated.

Mean-time the wretched Charles murmured his sorrows to the waves, while the rocks re-echoed his groans of anguish.

Nothing had been wanting to complete his misery but the sight of the ob

ject so dear to him, while impressed with the conviction that she was lost to him for ever.

To reside in the same place with her; and to be liable to meeting her continually was insupportable!

But it was probable that if they were on a tour, as Mr. Beryl had told him in his letter, they might not continue long at Brighton, and he resolved to seclude himself for some days under the plea of illness, and not again attempt to appear abroad till he was convinced that Mr. and Mrs. Temple had left Brighton.

He heeded not the hours, regardless of the uneasiness his absence might occasion his friends, ignorant as they were of where he was, or why he had absented himself, and the evening was closed in, "the sea darkly tumbled beneath the blast, and the roaring waves were climb-

ing over the rocks," ere he but his steps homeward.

Having reached his chamber, he sent word by his servant (who supplied him with a glass of wine and biscuit, for he had taken nothing since he had read the fatal letter) to Colonel Villeroy, that he had taken a long walk, and was so much fatigued that he could not appear again that evening, but should go to bed directly.

He passed the night as he had passed the day, in useless repinings for the folly of his conduct, and for having, as it were, voluntarily relinquished the place he believed he had once held in Augusta's heart, at a time when, had it not been for his own reprehensible neglect, and absurd ambition, he might have been happy in the possession of a blessing, which was now beyond his reach.

He thought it was impossible Augusta could really love a man so many years older than herself as was Mr. Temple; and his misery increased as he reflected on how much happiness they had both lost.

CHAP XVIII.



“ Quick to my lips my soul ascends,
“ Must it expire or live?—Decree:
“ For on thy voice my fate depends.”

SIR W. JONES TRANSLATION OF HAFIZ.

TO describe Clifford's feelings for the next fortnight, during which he confined himself to his chamber, would but be to delineate what we have already slightly represented.

He was constantly visited by both the Villeroys and Captain Stanhope; but though he protested he was too unwell to leave his room, he would not permit the attendance of a doctor.

He was very anxious to discover if Mr. Temple's party had left Brighton; but how to ascertain this he could not divine.

He was still pondering on the subject, when Clarence entered his room. The joyous expression of his countenance excited Clifford's observation.

"O Charles!" cried Clarence as he seated himself, "I am the happiest fellow in the world! But I cannot bear to see you look so miserable, when I am ready to jump over the moon with joy."

"I am very glad to hear it; and pray may I ask what has occasioned you such extreme satisfaction?"

"You shall hear, you shall hear, my dear Charles, though I believe in strict propriety I ought not to tell any body *some* parts of the story, but I hate *strict propriety*, so now for it. You must

know when I left town to go on the Cambridge excursion, as I passed so near my uncle's house, I determined to dine there, and remain there till the next day (I told you what a pretty girl Cordelia Lethbridge was) well, she was in such high good humour, and seemed so glad to see me, and took so much pleasure to make the time pass pleasantly, and *all that you know*, that I immediately resolved to extend my visit to my *uncle*, and, to make short of the story, I wrote to excuse myself from joining the cantabs, and remained at my uncle's till I had persuaded myself I was desperately in love, and had no reason to dread an *absolute* rejection. Besides, I thought it would be a good *speculation* to marry Cordelia, to which I conceived the old gentleman would offer no objection, as he seemed most *conveniently* blind; and *I* thought shut his eyes on purpose. But all of a sudden he opened them, and

kicked up such a row! accusing me of ungenerously undermining his daughter's affections; when, Heaven knows, if she had not begun *first* it would never have entered my head! However, he shut the poor girl up in her room, and without any ceremony gave me my *cong  *. On which occasion I returned to town in that sudden manner; and feeling most abominably silly, I resolved to be most profoundly mysterious, nor breathe a syllable of where I had really passed the period of my absence, being horribly alarmed lest this foolish affair should transpire. I had not been a week absent from Cordelia before I felt my passion cool most sensibly; and I was rather sorry than glad to find, by the letters I had received from her, that she still continued to consider me as her devoted slave, and bade me not despair, but look forward to happier times. I was of course obliged to reply to them in a corresponding tone, so that I felt myself in a

measure entangled. Such was my situation, when about a week—a month—I know not how long, but it seemed an *age* while I continued in suspense, I beheld enter the library, where I was lounging, the most beautiful angel I ever saw in my life! She was accompanied by a lady and gentleman, whom I afterwards found to be her mother and father. I never in my life was so struck by any one's appearance! I was mad to get introduced to her; and as a leading step I entered into conversation with the *papa*, on the news of the day, and seized an opportunity of letting him know who I was, by ordering some books to be sent home for the *Honorable Clarence Villeroy*. The gentleman immediately asked me if he had not the pleasure of addressing one of Lord Calisbrook's sons? I answered in the affirmative, and he told me he had once known my father; *this* was quite enough; I was instantly, by my request, presented to the

ladies, accompanied them in their walk, and was absolutely so over head and ears in love by dinner time, that I could not eat a morsel.

“The next day I took my brother and sister with me to pay their compliments to my new friends. I became their constant visitor and attendant; and by the end of a week I was resolved to marry my lovely angel (that is if she would have me) for to all her other charms are added twenty thousand pounds at her own disposal.

“But I did not exactly know what to do with my poor dear tiresome Cordelia, and being rather annoyed, I told my brother the whole story. I have not seen him laugh so much these six years, as he did when I communicated to him my dilemma; and you may easily suppose I joined in his mirth when he declared that Cordelia had played the very same game with him, and he had really been somewhat distressed by a supposition that she was attached to

him; but he being wiser than myself, made an honorable retreat the moment he suspected a design of taking him prisoner. As soon as I could speak for laughing, I proposed sending back all the letters she had written to us both, inclosed in the same cover, with our best respects, requesting she would make free use of them to take copies from, when she might have occasion to address some of the numerous tribe we doubted not her charms would enslave, as such an expedient would save her the trouble of composing so many new ones on the *same* subject. But Ferdinand, though he owned she deserved it, would not agree to this, as he said he did not wish to mortify her. However, I resolved to send back all she had ever written to me, accordingly I enclosed them in a cover, stating, that as I had accidentally discovered that I was not the *only* person she had favored by such evidences of her regard, I begged leave to resign all pretensions to being so distin-

guished for the future. This being settled, I determined to lose no time in openly declaring my new passion; though Ferdinand tried to persuade me it was too early to enter upon the subject; but you know his slow, considerate way of acting; I begged leave to judge for myself in this case, and yesterday, in due form, I applied to her father, and acquainted him with my pretensions. He told me the young lady was entirely at liberty to choose for herself; that she had twenty thousand pounds of her own, but which had become hers with a proviso that it should be settled on herself whenever she should marry.

“I *professed* that this was a matter of total indifference to me, and requested that he would make known the purport of our conversation to his daughter, which he promised to do, and to acquaint me as soon as possible with the result; and this morn-

ing I received a letter! such a delightful letter! here it is, I will read it to you.

“Dear Sir,

“I have communicated to my daughter the subject of our *tete-a-tete* yesterday, and I can safely assure you, you have no reason to despair.

“She is averse to a hasty union with one she has known so short a time; but is above the affectation of pretending an unwillingness to admit your visits on the footing you are desirous of being received.

I am, &c.”

“Now, my dear Charles,” continued Clarence, folding up the letter, which he had read with a rapidity

that scarcely allowed him to breathe, "you see I have great cause to consider myself the happiest man in existence.

"As soon as ever the clock strikes twelve I shall be off to my Dulcinea; it would not be decorous to appear earlier.

"I wish to Heaven you were well enough to go with me! I am all impatience to introduce her to you; but I trust that by the end of a month, spite of the hint against a *hasty union*, I shall be able to present her to you as Mrs. *Clarence Villeroy*; no Mrs. *Villeroy*! You know till Ferdy marries she will have a right to be called Mrs. *Villeroy*! I hate dilatoriness and indecision in these cases; I see no manner of use in delay, when one is once resolved on a thing.

"But I can't bear to see you look so unhappy Charles, when I am all joy!

I have been perfectly unreserved with you; now do tell me what is the matter. Do, if it is only out of compassion to me, talk a little, for I am completely out of breath."

Charles hesitated a moment; then feeling that it would be some relief to his heart, to acknowledge the occasion of his misery, he frankly told Clarence, that he had, while at Mr. Beryl's, conceived a strong attachment to a young lady, who, he had flattered himself was not indifferent to him, and that he had a short time since learnt that she had married another; he forbore to mention her name, or that she was at Brighton.

Clarence sympathized most feelingly with his friend, for in the account he had given him, he could not perceive how much blame did in reality attach to the youth himself.

He advised him to think no more of the jilt, saying she was not worth pining for; and shortly after he flew off to pay his *devoirs* to his new flame.

As Clarence quitted the chamber, Captain Stanhope entered.

CHAP. XIX.



“ Ah ! hide for ever from my sight,
“ The faithless flatterer Hope ! whose pencil gay,
“ Pourtrays some vision of delight,
“ Then bids the fairy tablet fade away !
“ While in dire contrast to mine eyes,
“ Thy phantoms yet more hideous rise, [flower,
“ And memory draws from pleasure’s wither’d
“ Corrosives for the heart of fatal power !

CHARLOTTE SMITH.

“ WELL, Charles,” cried Captain Stanhope, “ can’t I persuade you to come and take a walk ? You will never get well while you confine yourself in this manner. You are *nervous* ! I am sure you are, for you do not appear to be affected by any particular malady ! Come now, do ; and by way of an in-

ducement I will promise you a sight of the new beauty that all the town is mad about. She is now walking on the Steyne. I passed by a posse of officers, who were standing still, apparently in anxious expectation of something; I could not help laughing when they told me they had stopped in order to have a good look at the beautiful Miss Sebright!"

"Miss Sebright!" echoed Charles, colouring, "What Sebright?"

"Indeed I don't know *what Sebright*; I only know that she is very beautiful, and is the step-daughter of a Mr. Temple, who has lately married her mother; and settled twenty thousand pounds on the young lady."

While Stanhope was speaking, Charles stood at the window with his back to him, and so great was the revulsion in his feeling that he could scarcely support himself.

“ Well, will you come ? ” cried Stanhope, wholly unconscious of his disorder.

Charles with difficulty articulated, “ I will follow you ; ” and his friend left the room.

Clifford swallowed some water, then taking Mr. Beryl’s letter from his pocket, he again read the sentence he had so frequently perused, and now immediately perceived that it had been as applicable to Mrs. Sebright as to her daughter, but from being prepossessed with an idea that it was the latter, and also from the mention that was made of her having been rendered independant, and raised to a superior station, he had concluded of course that *she* was the bride.

Mr. Temple had been an admirer of Mrs. Sebright’s even in her juvenile days, before she had married at all, but he was

not then his own master, and had no will independent of his father, who would never have consented to his uniting himself to any woman who possessed neither rank or fortune.

His son, aware of this, had with strict propriety and honour, forbore to intimate his attachment to the fair object that excited it. But when, many years after, she returned a widow to reside in the neighbourhood, he at once resolved to offer her his hand, as soon as he could ascertain that he was agreeable to her.

Mrs. Sebright had never been violently attached to her first husband, though she had made him a most exemplary wife, and perhaps even now that she had passed the period when the affections are conceived to be most violent, Mr. Temple excited a more lively sentiment in her

breast than she had ever before experienced.

But she took time to consider of the step she meditated, and did not promise to be his till convinced there was not one objection to be offered against this union, while, on the contrary, the greatest advantage would accrue from it both to herself and beloved child.

Mr. Temple avowed his liberal intentions in regard to the latter ; and this it was which had made Mrs. Sebright so perfectly easy in respect to Charles Clifford's attentions to Augusta, who, she was at that time sensible would very shortly be raised to opulence, when she justly conceived she would be a very suitable match for Mr. Clifford, who, she believed would not then hesitate a moment to declare the passion she felt confident he entertained for her daughter.

Mr. Beryl in writing an account of this marriage to Charles, had not *intentionally* misled him; he imagined he must be aware that Mr. Temple was the admirer of Mrs. Sebright, and that a marriage was likely to ensue; he forgot that Charles's attention had always been so engrossed with the daughter, that he had never heeded the demeanour of any one else present, and was besides deceived by an idea that Mr. Temple was attached to Augusta, mistaking paternal affection, for a more tender sentiment.

As soon as his extreme agitation would permit him, Charles hastened to follow Captain Stanhope.

He resolved to lose no time in repairing as far as was possible, the rudeness he must have appeared to have been guilty of towards Augusta, her

mother, and Mr. Temple by his extraordinary behaviour in meeting them.

His only excuse for this would be to plead, that a sudden indisposition had at the moment seized him.

His sanguine imagination now in one moment looked forward to every thing that was delightful, when once he should be forgiven and received in favour again by Augusta; and "then," thought he, "I will confess to her the real cause of my consternation, when I first beheld her here, and paint to her the anguish I have endured while laboring under this dreadful mistake. She cannot fail to compassionate me! perhaps she may be induced to repay me for my sufferings!"

Animated by these ideas, he hastened to the Steyne, where he had been told that she was walking; determined to say that the illness which had affect-

ed him when they last beheld him, had confined him ever since to the house, and prevented his doing himself the honor of paying his respects to them.

It may be supposed the tumult in his heart did not decrease when he perceived Mr. Temple, his wife, and Augusta approaching.

His speech was ready framed, his hand raised to take off his hat, when to his utter dismay, Mr. and Mrs. Temple looked full at him, and passed him as they would an utter stranger, notwithstanding they must have perceived by his manner that he intended to address them; while Augusta looked straight forward in such a way that it was easy to discern that she saw him, though she chose to pretend that she did not.

To say that he was shocked would be

but weakly to express the sensation Charles experienced ! Scarcely could he recover himself sufficiently to recollect where he was, or that his disorder would attract observation. At length aware of this, he hurried home as fast as possible, resolved never to expose himself to a repetition of such a cutting insult. Yet on reflection, he could not but admit that his own behaviour at their last meeting, warranted the treatment he had now met with ; and unwilling to relinquish the hope that had again found place in his breast, he determined to write a note to Mrs. Temple in extenuation of his conduct, and also request to be permitted to repeat his apology in person. This, he accordingly did ; and in the course of the evening he received the following answer from Mrs. Temple,—“ No apology, or explanation, was expected or desired by Mrs. Temple or her family, from Mr. Clifford, and she must beg leave to decline the honor of a visit from him.”

It is difficult to say, if the mortification and unhappiness the receipt of this note occasioned. Charles, admitted of increase; if it did, his wretchedness was rendered complete, on learning, in the course of a conversation he had soon after with Colonel Villeroy, that Augusta Sebright was the object of Clarence Villeroy's pursuit; and that he was received at her father's house as an accepted lover!

CHAP. XX.

"Thine own impetuous willfulness did make
"The other's pliant mind more specious seem;
"And thou thyself did'st to that luckless union,
"Altho' unwittingly, assistance lend!

JOANNA BAILLIE.

AUGUSTA SEBRIGHT had been sincerely and ardently attached to Clifford, and the unhappiness his unworthy conduct in deserting and neglecting her, had occasioned her, was in proportion to the strength of her affection for him.

But once convinced that she ought not to love him, and that he was undeserving the place he had, through his own unmeaning assiduities, obtained in her

heart, she left no effort untried to overcome this weakness; and she succeeded even beyond her hopes; and at the time her mother's marriage had taken place, she believed she could have heard his name without blushing, and had she chanced to have met him, could have addressed him with perfect composure.

They had proceeded by a circuitous route to Brighton, where Mr. Temple intended to remain some time.

Augusta had been ignorant that the Villeroy party was there, till she happened to see their names on the list of arrivals; by this she was in some measure prepared for a rencontre with Clifford, and was resolved to conduct herself towards him with becoming and uniform indifference.

But the quick beating of her heart the first time she beheld him, convinced her

she had formed too high an opinion of her own self command ; but his behaviour on that occasion completely re-kindled her spirit.

The very next day Clarence Villeroy had been introduced to her by Mr. Temple.

His person and manners, it has been before observed, were peculiarly prepossessing ; at no moment could the undisguised admiration and pointed attentions of a young man of rank and attractions, have been more gratifying to Augusta, just smarting under the most unmerited neglect, and stung by the recent impertinence (for such she deemed it) of one whom she doubted not fancied that she loved him.

She felt the strongest anxiety to convince him he was mistaken ; and this perhaps was the primary motive which

induced her to receive the attentions of Clarence with a complacency that speedily led to a more intimate communication.

The open and honourable manner in which Clarence acted in so soon declaring his pretensions to her father, was also most gratifying to her feelings.

She had, as yet discovered in him none but the most amiable qualities; and if the sentiment she experienced for him was not so lively as that she had once felt for Clifford, nevertheless, she should enjoy as his wife a pleasing tranquillity; her affection for him would doubtless increase, and above all, she should convince Clifford that not one particle of the regard she had once entertained for him, now remained.

She was not aware that this latter mo-

tive in any way prompted her decision, and without much deliberation, she permitted Mr. Temple to write the letter to Clarence Villeroy which has already appeared.

Both Mr. and Mrs. Temple greatly rejoiced at Augusta's determination in favor of Clarence, as from this they inferred that she retained not any partiality for Clifford, with whom they were now thoroughly disgusted.

Mr. Temple had often witnessed his attentions to Augusta, and thought his conduct unjustifiable, as did also Mrs. Temple, now that she was convinced by his late behaviour that he did not intend to renew the intimacy; and it was agreed between them all, that should they again encounter Mr. Clifford they should conduct themselves in the manner which they did at their second meeting.

They knew he was an inmate in the same house with the Villeroy's, on which account Mrs. Temple had taken an opportunity of returning Miss Villeroy's visit, when she knew she was out, being averse to meeting Clifford in a small circle, when it would have been difficult to have avoided conversing in common with him.

She was not aware that he at that time confined himself to his chamber.

How Augusta felt when she passed Charles in such a contemptuous manner, we cannot exactly define; but as she met Clarence Villeroy immediately after, and it was the *first* time she had seen him since he had declared himself to her father, it is probable *that* idea chased away every other.

Colonel Villeroy was extremely pleased at the connection his brother was likely

to form, as it secured to him a comfortable provision.

He himself was happier than he had been for years ; his health was now perfectly restored ; Hygeia's genuine bloom had chased the saffron hue from his no longer hollow cheeks.

Owing to the great intimacy existing between Miss Villeroy and Virginia Stanhope, and their being constantly attended by their brothers, this agreeable *quartette* was almost inseparable ; and so perfectly in unison as to produce the sweetest harmony of congenial intercourse.

Not so entirely of accord was the *duet* between Augusta and Clarence. She would most willingly have joined the other young people, as she found that Clifford was never of their parties, but Clarence was uncomfortable when she

appeared to take the slightest degree of interest in any thing that did not concern him.

He really was most fervently attached to her, and was apprehensive that she did not feel an equal proportion of affection for him.

He wanted to be all the world to her, and was never so happy as when he could contrive to keep her with himself, her mother, or father; when he was certain her attention could not be attracted from him.

Augusta being sensible that this sprung from the excess of his love for her, could not be displeased at it, and she doubted not that when once she was his, and he felt secure that he could not lose her, he would no longer be so unreasonable as to desire to monopolize her exclusive notice.

He persecuted her incessantly to permit him to name an early period for their marriage; and when she reminded him of the short time they had been acquainted, he accused her of coldness, indifference, and a total disregard of what she made him suffer.

Perhaps from a sense that she in some measure merited the former part of the accusation, his reproaches distressed her; and she was grieved that she could not love him as much as he did her, but resolved to the utmost of her power to supply this deficiency, by the most studious attention to his happiness, and obedience to his will.

Anxious to atone to him for any seeming coldness in her manner, she no longer objected to his fixing with Mr. Temple on the wedding day, but she was somewhat startled when she found that through his importunities he had prevailed on Mr.

Temple to decide on so early a period as that day fortnight.

Meantime, poor Charles had resumed his close imprisonment in his chamber. Mrs. Temple had never mentioned the receipt of his note to Augusta, as she thought it might perhaps distress her, and revive his idea in her mind; and she believed it was only written on his having obtained a knowledge of her daughter being possessed of a handsome fortune. She greatly approved of her union with Clarence Villeroy, owing to his superior connections; she was not ignorant of his father's embarrassed circumstances, but Augusta's fortune was settled on herself, and the interest of it would be all that her husband could command. She was resolved not to separate from her mother, with whom she was to continue to reside after her marriage. Clarence was very well pleased with this arrangement, as he had not the means of supporting an establishment of his own.

He had acquainted his father with the alliance he was about to form, and his lordship was so well pleased with his son's success in the matrimonial line, that he sent him a liberal supply of money in notes, and a profusion of costly ornaments to present to his destined bride.

Had she known that not one of them was paid for (which was in fact the case) she would not have received much gratification in the possession of them.

CHAP. XXI.



" Love by fickle fancy banished,
" Spurn'd by hope, indignant flies ;
" But when love and hope are vanish'd,
" Restless mem'ry never dies.

" Far I go, where fate shall lead me,
" Far across the troubled deep ;
" Where no stranger's ear shall heed me,
" Where no eye for me shall weep !"

MRS. ROBINSON.

EVEN Mrs. Temple's icy note, would have failed to annihilate hope in Clifford's breast, and he still would have flattered himself he might be able through some means or other to reinstate himself in the good opinion of Augusta, had he not found that Clarence was her declared and received admirer.

By this he was compelled to relinquish all pretensions to her, for it would indeed have been dishonourable in him to have attempted reviving an interest in her heart, even had it been in his power, or to have taken one step towards supplanting his friend in the affections of an object, in regard to whom he had acted with such candour and propriety.

Charles resolved not a second time to incur that greatest of all humiliations self-condemnation. His inconsiderate and reprehensible conduct, in the first place, had occasioned the wreck of his happiness, but his soul revolted at the idea of undermining the felicity of his friend, and he determined in secret to endure what was rendered most galling, by a conviction that it was merited.

His only wish now was to leave

Brighton,—but whither could he go? He was obliged to reside with one or other of his guardians, and to return without any plea, to Lord Calisbrook's residence in London, while all the family, except his lordship, were absent, would excite surprise, and appear very unaccountable; and even should he request and obtain permission to repair to Mr. Beryl's, it was probable the person he most wished to avoid would shortly return to that neighbourhood; on no account therefore could he think of going into Yorkshire.

Yet to remain at Brighton while every one was talking of the approaching nuptials, and be compelled to continue there during their actual celebration, he believed was more than he could have supported, and he resolved to write to his guardians to request their permission to visit the continent, and indulge

his curiosity to travel over foreign regions.

This, he accordingly did, and while awaiting the answers to his letters, he still secluded himself entirely.

Clarence was now so wholly engrossed that he rarely requested admission to him; and when he did, Charles excused himself from receiving him; for to have seen, and conversed with him at this time, he felt would have been more than he could have endured without betraying his feelings.

He was glad that he had in a measure let Clarence into his confidence, as he had thereby accounted to him for his unhappiness, and at the same time completely prevented his discovering or even suspecting the real circumstances of the case, by giving him a detail which was in fact erroneous, as he himself had been

deceived when he intrusted Clarence with the then source of his misery.

Clarence frequently alluded to his friend Charles Clifford, in Augusta's presence, and on the very morning of the day on which she had consented to his fixing the period for their marriage, he had in the course of conversation expressed his regret to her that Clifford was so unwell that he could not come out, and he (Clarence) was thus deprived of the pleasure of introducing him to her. He continued in his usual gay, thoughtless manner, forgetting that he had been entrusted in confidence with the cause of Charles's unhappiness,—"Unwell, I said; but however that is not exactly the case; his is a mental malady. Poor fellow, he is most desperately in love with some ungrateful girl, who, a short time since, without any reason in the world, deserted him, and married another man!"

The entrance of a third person, gave a sudden turn to the conversation, and the subject was dropped; but when Augusta had leisure to reflect on what Clarence had said respecting Clifford, it appeared evident to her that Charles had formed a new attachment, which had occasioned his present disappointment, and she more than ever rejoiced that she had so far subdued her own weakness as to resolve on espousing another.

By the end of a week from the time he had written, Charles received an answer to his letter to Mr. Beryl.

The old gentleman offered no objection to his plan of travelling, but, on the contrary, said he should greatly approve of it, provided he could meet with some steady and respectable man, who might be inclined for a similar excursion, whose companion he might be, and who would point out to him what was most worthy of

visiting, and put him upon his guard against the impositions that doubtless would be practised on him.

Mr. Beryl added, that he thought him too old to commit to the charge of a tutor, particularly one, such as he should approve of, would be very difficult to be obtained, but he thought that on enquiry it was by no means improbable he might be able to meet with a travelling companion, such as he had described, when he should willingly consent to his going, but could not feel himself justified in permitting him to go alone.

Charles had before received an unconditional assent to his request from Lord Calishbrook, but Mr. Beryl's stipulation still occasioned a delay.

Charles shewed the letter to Colonel Villeroy, who promised to make a general enquiry through his circle of ac-

quaintance, in which he thought it probable there were many who might meditate a visit to the continent ; for just at this time people of all ranks and descriptions were flocking over to France like a flight of gulls, driven by a northern gale across the channel ; braving the certainty of their being pigeoned before they came back again, regardless of the metamorphosis, feeling pretty confident they should ultimately resume their original character of simple geese.

Colonel Villeroy was convinced that the seat of Clifford's disorder was in the mind, but he solicited not his confidence, believing that had he not been averse to acknowledging the cause of his unhappiness, he would have confessed it to him unasked, as he could not doubt his friendship.

He much approved of his going abroad, as change of scene was best calculated to

dispel his melancholy, and an intercourse with other nations could not fail of expanding his ideas, and improving his taste and manners; though the latter were extremely pleasing and gentleman-like, yet the polish of courts was required to make them resemble Colonel Villeroy's.

Though compelled to remain some time longer at Brighton, Charles doubted not he should have left it long before the fatalevent he so much dreaded, should have actually taken place, as he had no idea that it was fixed for so very early a period; what then was his dismay when one morning Colonel Villeroy entered his chamber, and said he was that moment returned from church, where he had been to witness his brother's marriage with Miss Sebright!

Charles stood the livid statue of despair, then staggering a few paces, he fell into a

chair, and gasped for breath. Villeroy regarded him with some alarm, but concluding him to be affected by some sudden bodily indisposition, he hastened to bring him a glass of water from the adjoining dressing room.

He presented it to Charles, but the wretched youth put it back, and concealing his face with his hands, he burst into tears.

It was out of his power at a moment like this to restrain his feelings, and and placing implicit confidence in Villeroy, he, as well as his agitation would permit him, imparted to him, without reserve, the original and present cause of his excessive anguish, and felt some relief to his bursting heart in thus laying it open to his friend.

This was the day which had been appointed for the celebration of Augusta's

marriage with Clarence Villeroy, which had accordingly taken place, and immediately after the ceremony the bride and bridegroom, with Mr. and Mrs. Temple had left Brighton for Bognor Rocks, where they intended remaining some weeks.

VIRGINIA.

CHAP. XXII.

“The guileful god, about the hero long,
“With children’s play and false embraces hung.”

“The hero’s valour, acts, and birth inspire,
“Her soul with love, and fan the secret fire:
“His words, his looks, imprinted in her heart,
“Improve the passion, and increase the smart.”

VIRGIL.

COLONEL VILLEROY, on the day of his brother’s marriage, gave a dinner to a numerous assemblage of both sexes, in honor of the occasion, but so deeply was he affected by the recital he had that morning heard from poor Charles, that he could with difficulty assume a semblance of gaiety, and was continually haunted by the idea of the sufferings the

unfortunate youth was at that moment enduring.

Greatly did the Colonel regret that the task of entertaining his company would not permit him to devote the hours, to at least attempting, to ameliorate the feelings of his friend, and sympathizing with him in his misery.

Villeroy was uneasy also on his own account; he had on the preceding evening at the play, been foiled in an endeavour to obtain a place next Miss Stanhope, owing to which he had been out of humour and dispirited during the performance, scarcely heard a word the actors said, and passed a restless and disturbed night.

He was much distressed at discovering that such a mere trifle could have the power to discompose him so greatly.

He began to suspect he felt too lively an interest for Miss Stanhope, and he believed that to act with the prudence his situation required, he ought immediately to absent himself from her society; but he did not like to reflect on this subject, being certain that the more he considered it, the more should he be convinced of the expediency of his acting in opposition to his inclination, and once thoroughly persuaded of the necessity of so doing, he never permitted himself to demur; he therefore forbore to scrutinize too deeply his own heart, as he strongly suspected he should not find it exactly in the state he could wish.

Miss Stanhope was present at the dinner, which indeed included every one the Villeroy's visited at Brighton.

Virginia was seated next the major of her brother's regiment. He was gene-

rally esteemed a very agreeable man, though he was no great favorite of Colonel Villeroy's; his person was certainly not very prepossessing, being of a gigantic height, remarkably thin, yet awkwardly made; his complexion was *ferociously* dark, but there was something comical in the lines of his countenance, which was humoured by an extraordinary *twist* in the eyes, nearly bordering on, though not actually amounting to a confirmed squint.

He was an incessant talker, and never in his life had experienced that awkward sensation which almost every body has felt at times, produced by a sudden dearth of conversation, and an inability to recollect any thing to say to terminate the pause.

So anxious was the major, on the present occasion, to entertain his fair neighbour, that he would scarcely permit himself time to eat, and not unfre-

quently resumed his declamation before he had disposed of the obstructions which impeded the free exercise of his most active member, and ere he had recovered sufficient breath, after a copious draught, to allow the organs of speech to exert themselves distinctly.

He abounded in anecdote, and did ample justice to the stories he related, as he could imitate with facility the *patois* of most of the English counties, and the Scotch and Irish accents; and to those who understood but little of French and Italian, he appeared a proficient in both.

Whatever subject was started, he never failed to speak on it, nor to give his opinion after the manner of one who is confident that he is right; by which means he often impressed his au-

ditors with a conviction that he was really so.

There was no art or science, however abstruse or remote, that he did not *seem* to have a knowledge of, as he generally contrived with great fluency to bring in the technical terms peculiar to each, and thus persuaded those who knew nothing themselves, and indeed some who were not quite so ignorant, that he was a very clever, and deeply learned man.

Books too were a favorite topic with him; he was acquainted with most ancient and modern authors, *by name*, having *skimmed* many miscellaneous productions, and now and then *dipped* into a review.

He had a remarkable good memory in respect to some things; and what he picked up he always retained, and thus fancied

himself competent to pass judgment on the lettered world.

Miss Stanhope, being of a lively disposition, was extremely amused by the major's incessant efforts to entertain her; there was scarcely a thing on the table that did not remind him of some extraordinary anecdote, or remarkable circumstance that had happened to himself; and when Miss Stanhope retired with the other ladies to the drawing room, she declared to them that Major Patch was quite as agreeable as any jest book, and she certainly should advise him to write one, as his stock of *repartees* and *bon mots* would exceed any modern publication of that description.

“He is really very agreeable,” added Virginia.

“Yes,” returned Miss Villeroy, “a very agreeable *three days* acquaintance; and after that, should you never see him

again, you would continue all your life to consider him a most entertaining companion."

"What do you mean?" asked her friend.

"O, by the time you have been a few times in his company you will find out what I mean."

Her words were verified; it chanced that Virginia encountered the major several times successively at different parties, and she soon found that his whole stock of stories had revolved, and that they were making their re-appearance very rapidly.

Virginia betrayed inattention; it mattered not; the major continued to hold forth with his accustomed volubility, and arrested the ear of his auditor with most unconscionable perseverance.

Miss Stanhope vainly awaited a pause,

which would permit her to escape from him without being guilty of rudeness, when Colonel Villeroy (who was present) observed this violent attack upon her oral faculties, and kindly relieved her from the enthrallments of the major's chain of wonderful anecdotes, by telling her his sister wished to speak with her.

The moment Virginia joined her, Miss Villeroy asked her if she still continued to think Major Patch agreeable?

"O, no indeed," cried Virginia, "quite the reverse. I now perfectly understand what you meant by a very agreeable *three days* acquaintance; by the end of that time one has heard his whole stock of extraordinary stories, and as he still continues as voluble as ever, one is condemned to hear a repetition of what, though it at the first hearing created a smile of

mirth, at a second or third never fails to excite one of derision."

"To me," said Villeroy, "Major Patch is one of the most annoying companions I ever met with. I always avoid him as much as possible, for if he once seizes on one's ear, to escape him is next to a miracle."

"I really thought him very pleasant the first time I was in his company," said Virginia.

"So did I," rejoined the Colonel, "but unfortunately I was on board a ship with him for six weeks, and I thought he would have talked me into a fever. My nerves were in an absolute state of irritation from impatience at hearing the same thing so often repeated, and my senses actually confused by the unvarying din of his incessant tongue. I have ever since avoided his very atmosphere; and when compelled to pass him, I take a large circuit to keep out of reach of him, for I know if he can but seize me by a

button of my coat, he will retain me a prisoner, till some other listener comes to my relief."

The ladies laughed, and I declared they should in future take the same precaution.

Captain Stanhope, who was standing by, observed, that though anecdote in a moderate degree, appropriate, and well chosen, was extremely amusing in conversation, the propensity in general grew upon those who had the talent of telling a story well, and they seemed to forget that they were monopolizing the whole attention, and frequently became tedious instead of amusing.

"On such occasions," rejoined Miss Villeroy, "the company are convened into an audience, and the chief pleasure of society, in my opinion, annihilated. Each should have their part in the discourse, other-

wise it cannot be termed conversation. I must confess I have a great dislike to these *regular* story tellers, who have one ready for every occasion, which they persist in relating, however indifferent one may appear. There are a *set* of stories which seem to be current in society; I can remember hearing them as long as I can recollect any thing, and yet they still continue to be repeated, and are constantly related as if they were quite new. They class with all the stale witticisms that never fail to follow the appearance of a calf's head upon the table, and a long string of hacknied puns upon names, which every one has heard a thousand times over. I am so weary of these things I can scarcely constrain my features into the smile that is expected when they are repeated."

"In this I have the advantage of you," said Virginia, "for I have seen so little of the world, that what you consider as completely worn out, is new to me,

and consequently pleasing. All my knowledge of *old* stories is confined to *family* witicisms and a few laughable dilemmas in the domestic circle; these, with some *original* words coined on some ludicrous occasion, which are become current in our family, are all the store of hacknied jokes which my memory retains, and, contrary to yours, retains with pleasure, and are always reverted to with renewed mirth.

Miss Villeroy, though she smiled, sighed as she reflected that her domestic circle had not been of a description to engender genuine mirth, or afford pleasing retrospections, and she envied her friend the superior advantage of having been bred in retirement, in the genial sunshine of maternal tenderness.

Great was the revolution that had taken place in Miss Villeroy's sentiments within a very few months;—visions of

splendor and ambition no longer occupied her breast, while the delights of reciprocal affection, and the refined gratification of supporting every difficulty and deprivation for the sake of those we love, was the pleasing theme of her meditations.

Nor could she form a higher idea of earthly felicity, than to be permitted to share every danger and hardship with the being her heart had selected as its master.

The most respectful and unremitting attention was shewn her by Captain Stanhope, but never did he breathe a word of love, though never was that passion experienced to a more exalted degree than by him; but he was only a soldier of fortune, and to make known his sentiments to Miss Villeroy was the last thing he would have thought of.

Her complacency towards him, he im-

puted to his being the chosen friend of her brother, and partly to the affection she evinced for his sister Virginia.

That Miss Villeroy, whom he believed to be ambitious, and who he knew had always been accustomed to every luxury and indulgence, would ever dream of uniting her fate with his, never entered his head.

He was convinced his passion was a hopeless one, but such was the gentle tenderness of his disposition, that he could not attempt to struggle with it,

“For with each secret glance he stole,

“The fond enthusiast sent his soul.”*

And he fancied in the excess of his affection that he could feel happy in the

* Walter Scot.

contemplation of her felicity, even should she derive it from an union with another.

The same excessive sensibility, with the most elevated sentiments, characterized his sister, who persuaded herself she felt an exalted degree of *friendship* for Colonel Villeroy, and that to serve him, or prove the strength of her regard for him, or his sister, she would have made any sacrifice which could only affect her own happiness, imagining, with all the innocence of a pure and refined heart, that the sentiment she felt for him, was precisely of the same nature as that she experienced for his sister.

But Villeroy's conscience whispered that he was exciting an emotion in the ingenuous breast of this lovely girl, which it was impossible he could reward.

Colonel Villeroy was unused to the reproaches of his conscience; it was a power he never could engage with, and the moment it attacked him, he was vanquished.

CHAP. XXIII.

“ Driven by fate where’er I go,
“ O’er burning plains, or hills of snow ;
“ Or on the bosom of the wave,
“ The howling tempest doom’d to brave,
“ When e’er my lonely course I bend,
“ Thy image shall my steps attend ;
“ Each object I am doom’d to see,
“ Shall bid remembrance picture thee.”

MRS. ROBINSON.

“ CHARLES,” said Colonel Ville-roy, as he one morning entered Clifford’s apartment, “ I have found a companion for you in your journey.”
“ Thank Heaven ! now I may be permitted to quit this hated place,” cried the wretched Charles, who loathed the scene of his misery.

"We will set off to-morrow if you please," said the Colonel.

"*We!*" echoed Charles; "What do you mean?"

"That I am resolved to accompany you! I am anxious to visit the continent, and—and—in short, I must go somewhere; therefore, Charles, we will not part, and may the Gallic gales waft from our hearts every ungrateful remembrance!"

This intelligence afforded Charles a more pleasurable sensation than he had for many weeks experienced.

Villeroy was aware that his scheme would meet with opposition from his sister, and he was at a loss how to reconcile her to it; for besides being deprived of his society, she could not with propriety remain at Brighton, to which she appeared so partial, after his departure, un-

less he could place her under some equally respectable protection.

It suddenly struck him that she might be accommodated in the same house with Mrs. Pelham, who would be a *chaperon* for her, and thus she might still continue at Brighton, and benefit by the society of her friend Virginia.

While Villeroy was revolving this project, his sister had repaired to Mrs. Pelham's.

She found Captain Stanhope there; he was sitting alone when she entered the room, and upon her enquiring for the ladies, he said, Mrs. Pelham was too unwell to rise before breakfast, and Virginia had just quitted him in tears.

"How then," cried Miss Villeroy, in

an apprehensive tone, "is Mrs. Pelham *dangerously* ill?"

"No," returned Stanhope, yet he spoke in a dejected voice.

"Then why was Virginia in tears?"

"I had been telling her a piece of news that distressed her."

"What was it?" cried Miss Villeroy with quickness; but suddenly checking herself, she added, "but perhaps it was some family concern, a secret; I beg pardon."

"No, it was public intelligence; I thought you might perhaps have heard it already."

"Heard what?" cried Miss Villeroy in alarm.

"Our regiment is ordered to embark for North America."

Every particle of colour in one instant fled from the cheeks of Miss Villeroy.

Stanhope ventured to take her hand, as he said with eager anxiety—

“ You are ill ! ”

She breathed with difficulty, but inarticulately pronounced, “ Quite well ; when do you go ? ”

“ We march from hence on Thursday to embark at Portsmouth. ”

It was now Monday.

“ Poor Virginia, ” murmured Miss Villeroy, and bursting into tears, she concealed her face in her handkerchief, and vainly attempted to suppress her deep sobs.

“ O ! what a tender friend are you ! ” cried Stanhope, “ how happy is Virginia in exciting such sympathy ! ”

His eyes became suffused as he still retained her unresisting hand.

“And think you,” she said, in a scarcely audible voice, “that I do not feel some degree of regret, in losing a companion with whom we have passed so many happy hours?”

An idea now for the first time shot through Stanhope’s mind, as he felt her hand tremble in his; it had the effect of electricity on his whole frame.

“O! Miss Villeroy,” he exclaimed, “I must leave you! I am a mad, presumptuous wretch, and if I stay another moment, I shall say something which you will never pardon.”

Though he spoke thus, he attempted not to withdraw, but grasped her hand with increased fervour.

After a short pause, in which she con-

tinued silent, "nor bade him even by a look depart," he added,—

"I am a poor soldier, destined to combat with all the vicissitudes of war, climate, and the elements, and yet I dare— O! I blush at my own temerity! Banish me as I deserve, Miss Villeroy! Banish me for ever from your presence, or I shall offend still farther."

"Stanhope," said she, in timid accents, "I can neither banish you from my presence nor from my —" heart, she would have added, but the word died on her lips, while her embarrassment spoke it for her.

Having thus far detailed this interview, we may conclude the reader will not be surprised to hear that 'ere it terminated, Miss Villeroy had consented to espouse Captain Stanhope immediately, and accompany him to Halifax, which was the destination of his regiment.

Stanhope delayed not a moment to acquaint his friend Villeroy with the result of the morning's *tete-a-tete*.

The Colonel was not in the least astonished, for he had long been convinced that his sister was attached to Stanhope, and he doubted not she would find happiness in this union; notwithstanding she would be subject to all the hardships and vicissitudes attendant on a military life, and be obliged to practice a regular economy; but for the sake of a man she so tenderly loved, he felt certain she would support every difficulty with cheerfulness and pleasure.

For form sake an express was sent off to Lord Calisbrook for his consent to a union which was already fixed upon.

His lordship's reply was, that as his

daughter had rejected a splendid and suitable alliance, which he had approved, she was now at liberty to act for herself, she must be aware that she could expect nothing from him.

Mr. Stanhope, a kind and affectionate father, answered his son's letter on the same subject, by return of post, enclosing a draft for a hundred pounds, the fruits of judicious economy, with a promise of sending something more by the time he reached Portsmouth; to this was added, the united and fervent blessing of his family.

Under these circumstances the marriage took place on the day the regiments quitted Brighton; and Mrs. Stanhope having taken a most affectionate and affecting leave of her brother, Virginia, and Charles Clifford, who had now emerged from his solitude, set out with her husband for Portsmouth, from

whence they shortly after embarked for Halifax.

In her sorrow for the departure of her brother and her friend, Virginia concealed the keen regret she experienced at the knowledge of Villeroy's resolution to accompany Clifford abroad.

Mrs. Pelham had not derived that benefit to her health which she had expected from a residence at Brighton, and had determined to return home, at which Virginia greatly rejoiced, for Brighton would have been a desert to her, after the dear circle which had given such charms to it, was dispersed.

Mrs. Pelham and Virginia, set off for Hampshire, on the same day that Colonel Villeroy and Charles commenced their journey to Dover; from whence they were to embark, and leave the land

of liberty for that of despotism! fly from the region of independance to that of oppression! from the goodly sunshine of respected royalty, to the suspicious gloom of unjust usurpation.

CHAP XXIV.



"Oh ! that thy charms were only fair to me !

"Displease all others, and secure my rest ;

"No need of envy. Let me happy be ;

"I little care that others know me blest.

"With thee in gloomy desarts let me dwell,

"Where never human footsteps mark'd the ground,

"Thou Light of Life ! all darkness can dispel,

"And seem a world with solitude around."

HAMMOND.

KOTZEBUE says, "When our ancestors married they had their honey years, our grandfathers their honey moons, our fathers their honey weeks, and from weeks, we are reduced to days."

Now though I should be extremely sorry to contradict an assertion of Augustus von Kotzebue of high renown, to whose merits, and far-spreading fame; even the *Stranger* bears testimony, (though apart in a whisper, I must confess I should have thought still better of him if this same stranger had never been introduced to my acquaintance) though, I repeat it, I exceedingly regret being compelled to doubt this gentleman's judgment on any point, I most heartily hope that in the instance above quoted, it is erroneous.

Yet I lament being obliged to acknowledge that it is only, in a *general* sense that I can presume to hope so, as unfortunately I have to delineate a *single* instance which may justify his aspersions on the honey of our dispositions at the present day!

Clarence Villeroy had *one* honey

week! during which his bride experienced that composed tranquillity which results from a conviction that one's fate (whatever it may be) is irremediable, and, therefore there is no longer any necessity to struggle against it.

Suspense being entirely at an end, resignation in most cases, naturally follows at a convenient distance, and gradually prepares the breast for the reception of new interests, and new hopes.

To this honey week, succeeded honey days, and these, alas! I grieve to state it, were speedily followed by honey hours; so that in this case, the sarcastic reflection of Augustus von Kotzebue on the age, was more than exemplified.

But it arose from a very different cause to that from which it in general springs, viz. want of affection, for *this* on

the contrary, was produced by a too great excess of it on one side.

The same eager anxiety, and restless agitation, so conspicuous in Clarence on all occasions, characterized his love for his wife. He scarcely ever left her, and was miserable if her attention was not entirely devoted to him.

She, as was her duty, exerted her utmost endeavours to promote his happiness; but to do so permanently was not in her power.

His feelings were ever fluctuating, one moment he was in Heaven, the next, through some ideal cause, he was perfectly wretched.

To study a disposition of this description was indeed an arduous task, and to satisfy it an impossibility.

The recollection that she had only known him *one month* when she had entrusted her happiness to his care, would sometimes flush across Augusta's mind, but she tried to banish it ; for to reflect on the rash impetuosity with which she had rushed into this union was now unavailing, and she endeavoured to persuade herself she did not regret it.

Having spent some weeks at Bognor Rocks, both Mr. and Mrs. Temple became anxious to return home, and quietly enjoy their domestic comforts ; the party accordingly set out for Yorkshire, where they arrived at the end of a few days, and took up their residence at Mr. Temple's magnificent country seat (Hilberry).

Mr and Mrs. Cotterel and Mr. Beryl, were amongst the first who paid their compliments at Hilberry, and were introduced to Clarence as relations.

He remembered to have heard their names frequently mentioned by Charles Clifford, and it instantly struck him as extraordinary that Augusta should not have seen and known Charles while he resided at Mr. Beryl's.

No sooner were the guests departed, than being left alone with Augusta, he asked her if she had not been in Yorkshire at the time Charles Clifford was with Mr. Beryl.

The abruptness of the question caused her suddenly to change colour, and she hesitated ere she replied—"Yes."

Clarence looked at her with surprise, not unmingled with displeasure, and observed it was very extraordinary that she had not been acquainted with him, as she was related to, and so very intimate with Mr. Beryl and his daughter.

Augusta's confusion increased, and the consciousness that he must perceive it, augmented it still more.

She made an effort to recover herself, and said, as she averted her face—

“We did know him—a little.”

“It is very odd you did not say so when I mentioned him to you at Brighton.”

Clarence spoke in an offended tone; after a short silence, Augusta replied—

“My mother and father did not like him, and they had no desire to renew their acquaintance with him.”

“*Why* did not they like him?”

“I don't know, at least, I suppose—that is, I believe they thought him proud and conceited.”

“They thought wrong then, for he is

neither one, nor the other. Did you think him so?"

"I—I am sure—I really—I knew so little of him. But how do you like Mrs. Cotterel?"

This sudden attempt to change the subject proved vain; Clarence could not understand Augusta's confusion and awkward demeanour while speaking of Clifford, and regardless of her question, he continued—

"Charles was attached to some lady in this neighbourhood, you probably know who it was?"

Augusta's face was again crimson, but terrified lest Clarence should suspect the truth, she assumed an air of unconcern as she said—

"I never heard he was attached to any body?"

“How! did not I myself tell you at Brighton that he was miserable from a hopeless passion he entertained for some lady he had known while he was at Mr. Beryl’s?”

Augusta felt heart sick, yet forced herself to say, “I remember your saying something about it.”

She perfectly recollected every word Clarence had said upon the subject, but he had not told her that it was to a lady Charles had known while he was at Mr. Beryl’s that he was attached, though Clarence thought he had; she had, therefore, naturally concluded it was some new passion, particularly as Clarence had said the lady was just married.

He continued with some impatience—

“Charles certainly was violently in

love with some lady in this neighbourhood; it is very odd you never should have heard of it. Surely you must know where he was in habits of the greatest intimacy! besides he told me that he once believed himself beloved, when most unexpectedly he heard the lady had married another. This he himself related to me, on the very day that I told him of my love for you, and shewed him Mr. Temple's note, permitting my addresses; it is very unaccountable, that *he* should not have mentioned having known you before!"

Clarence forgot that he had not spoken of Augusta by name, and that instead of shewing Charles Mr. Temple's letter, he had read it to him, and in his eagerness had omitted the signature.

Augusta felt completely oppressed; a croud of ideas pressed upon her mind, and faintly saying she knew nothing about

it, she rose and left the room, affecting an unconcerned aspect.

She wished, if possible, to banish the subject from her thoughts, for of what consequence was it to her, who Clifford was attached to? or what had actuated his conduct, but she could not entirely succeed, and with a pang it struck her, that it must have been herself to whom Charles had alluded, and that on being told by Clarence that she intended to accept him, Charles, in order to wave suspicion of the truth, had represented the object of his affections as already married, as indeed she might have been considered.

Yet how was Charles's behaviour on first meeting her to be accounted for?

Augusta suddenly checked her thoughts, they were leading her into a maze she had no business to explore, and in which

propriety and peace of mind must alike have been lost.

She resolved to endeavour to forget there was such a being in existence as Charles Clifford; she sincerely wished she might never again hear his name mentioned.

The remembrance of him was ever attended by a most uneasy sensation, a species of self-reproach and strong dissatisfaction, that was ever followed by a more than usual tenderness and affection in her manner towards her husband.

She speedily rejoined him after the conversation she had had with him respecting Clifford.

She found him sulky and out of humour; he could not comprehend the embarrassment he had betrayed; there was

something unaccountable in it, and this was quite sufficient to make him unhappy.

When she took his hand affectionately, he withdrew it with a discontented look; and to her efforts at conversation he only answered in monosyllables.

Augusta had frequently found that to appear offended with him, had often the effect of bringing her husband into good humour; she therefore said with a distressed and mortified air—

“As you do not seem to wish for my company, Clarence, I will leave you.”

He made no effort to detain her, and she quitted the room.

Mrs. Temple entered while Clarence

was lost in his gloomy meditations; she immediately perceived that something was wrong; she had been apprehensive that on coming to this neighbourhood he might hear how intimate Charles Clifford had been in her family, she was, therefore prepared for the question he abruptly asked her—

“Did Charles Clifford visit at your house?”

Mrs. Temple was instantly aware that it would be necessary both for the sake of her daughter's peace and her own, to mislead him in a measure, and she replied without hesitation—

“Often more than we wished. We thought him too attentive to Augusta; neither she nor I like him, and this determined us to avoid renewing our acquaintance with him at Brighton; and on

seeing him there, we passed him as we would an utter stranger."

"This is very extraordinary; he never mentioned it to me."

"It was not likely he should; no doubt he felt mortified."

"But why should you behave so rudely to him?"

A faint blush suffused Mrs. Temple's cheek, as she said—

"I did not approve of his connections, nor did I wish to admit him at my house on the footing he probably desired to be."

Clarence observed this account did not agree with that Charles himself had given him, respecting the person he was attached to; which he repeated.

Mrs. Temple said she doubted not

Mr. Clifford had told him this purposely to prevent his suspecting the truth.

“Poor Charles!” cried Clarence, who was now quite satisfied, supposing Augusta’s embarrassment had been occasioned by speaking of a person who, she was conscious, was partial to herself. “Poor Charles, he must have suffered a great deal when he found that I was accepted by one who had rejected him.”

Mrs. Temple did not rectify this mistake, as it had a very salutary effect on Clarence’s system, and restored him to perfect good humour.

He became anxious to seek Augusta, but Mrs. Temple said she would send her to him, which she did, having first hinted to her the error Clarence had fallen

into, and that it would be expedient not to undeceive him.

Clarence received his wife with rapture, and poured forth his thanks to her for having selected him above all others; and for a few hours he was in Paradise; when his felicity was again interrupted by his Augusta's accidentally petting a lap dog while he himself was sitting beside her.

"Why do you caress that animal, Augusta?" said he in a fretful tone; "You know I don't like it. I hate to see you make so much of it!"

"Indeed! I did not know you disliked him!" said Augusta, good-humouredly ceasing to pat the dog; "What has poor Pommette done to incur your displeasure?"

"I hate dogs!"

"You astonish me! I thought you were very fond of them."

"I like them very well in the stable ; but I hate the sight of that little beast !"

"What ! my poor Pommette, who has always been such a favorite ? I am very sorry," said Augusta, in a mortified tone.

Pommette attempted to jump up on the sofa beside his mistress, as he was accustomed to do.

"Get down, Pommette," cried Clarence passionately, giving him a slap that sent him whining under the sofa.

Augusta looked still more hurt, the tears were swimming in her eyes, but she said not a word.

"How ridiculous it is of you," cried Clarence to make such a fuss about that foolish dog !—It is well worth looking so miserable about certainly !"

“I do not look miserable about my dog, though I own I am fond of it, but I am hurt to see you treat any thing that you know I like, with such harshness.”

“How can you be so silly as to talk of being *fond* of a dog? It really makes me sick. It is no great compliment to be liked by you if you can bestow your affection on one of the brute creation. I suppose I am only to be caressed when Pommette is out of the way?”

Augusta now observed that, however absurd and childish the cause, Clarence was getting really angry.

She smothered a sigh in a forced laugh as she promised for the future only to take notice of Pommette when he was absent; and unanimity was again restored for a short time.

CHAP. XXV.



"A solitary blessing few can find ?

"Our joys with those we love are intertwin'd ;

"And he whose helpful tenderness removes,

"Th' obstrusting thorn that wounds the breast he

"Smooths not another's rugged path alone, [loves,

"But scatters roses to adorn his own."

FOR the first few weeks of their residence at Hilberry they were compelled to receive and return numerous visits.

This Clarence found extremely irksome, as in large companies he could not possibly monopolize the whole attention of his wife ; he always retired vexed and out of humour, and not unfrequently reproached her with great acrimony, and

certainly great injustice, with having felt happy while surrounded by a crowd who prevented his approaching her.

He lamented extremely his residence in so sociable a neighbourhood, and immediately within the circle of all his wife's relations and friends.

Augusta perceived that he was more captious than he usually was, and as to make him happy, and even prevent his wishes was her whole study, she was at a loss to account for this restless discontent, which, while it died his cheeks with the flush of agitation, drew them in to the hollow aspect of unhappiness.

She entreated him to tell her what affected him thus?

"Ah! Augusta!" he returned, "if you loved me as well as I love you, you would not asked that question! If I were

all the world to you, you would not desire any other society ; nay it would be as irksome to you as it is to me !”

“ My dear Clarence, indeed you wrong me ! It is in order to preserve your love that I wish you to have some other amusement besides that you could derive from my society, which you would cease to value if you had no other.”

“ You judge by yourself, Augusta ; if you loved me, you never could have made such a speech ! You prefer any society to mine ; even that of your dog !”

Augusta had tried for many weeks to promote her husband's happiness by implicit obedience to his will ; by yielding to all his whims, and indulging all his caprices ; notwithstanding which, she found that he grew worse and worse every day, and at the same time seemed less happy.

She feared that if she continued the same line of conduct, he would, presuming on her entire submission, arrive at that pitch that he would at length controul her very looks, nor suffer her to cast her eyes on any object but himself, and she determined to try what a trifling opposition would do towards improving their mutual comfort, which at present was totally destroyed; therefore instead of appearing hurt by what he said, and shedding tears, as she frequently did, at his unkind reproaches, she replied—

“It is impossible I can do more than I have already done to convince you of my affection, and you pretend to doubt it merely for the sake of tormenting me!”

“You have it in your power to satisfy all my doubts if you chuse it.”

“How?”

“Why by regularly declining all these

tiresome invitations, and staying at home with me !”

“ Do you then wish me to give up society entirely? I have already offended several of my friends by refusing to go to them, without being able to give any sufficient reason for so doing. I am not fond of dissipation, and to pursue it would be a thousand times more wearisome to me than the closest retirement; but to drop the friendly society we now have, would be to deprive us both of a great pleasure, and you would, I am sure, ere long regret it.”

“ You are so obstinate, there is no possibility of convincing you,” cried Clarence with impatience. “ Are you resolved to go to Mrs. Cotterel’s to dine to-day?”

“ Certainly, if you do not absolutely forbid me; for she was much hurt at my refusing to go the last time she invited me!”

“ *Forbid* you !” repeated Clarence ;

“you certainly are at liberty to do what you like best. I should never wish you to stay at home if you preferred going out; I should feel very little gratification in your compliance with my wishes merely from obedience and not from inclination?”

Augusta perceived that the tormenting fit was very strong upon him, and she resolved for once not to humour him; and try what effect that would have upon him; she therefore, left him to brood over his imaginary grievances, and went to prepare herself for the dinner party.

She was aware that the future happiness of her life depended on the manner in which she now acted; it was absolutely necessary that she should discover how best to manage her husband's perplexing disposition, which threatened to destroy their mutual peace, it was there-

fore requisite she should make some experiments upon it.

She had nearly finished her toilet when the carriage was announced, and she descended in expectation of finding Clarence ready to accompany her.

Mr. and Mrs. Temple were already seated in the coach, but Clarence did not appear.

Augusta enquired for him, they had not seen him.

She hastened to the apartment where she had left him, and where he still sat, not having made any alteration in his dress.

“Are you not going?” cried Augusta.

He made no answer, but maintained a sullen silence.

She continued “ If you had told me you would not go, you would have saved me the trouble of dressing myself.”

He now said,—“ I don’t wish for your company, I would much rather be left alone.”

“ Since that is the case then, I will not run the risk of offending my friend by disappointing her ; so good morning to you. I will order dinner to be prepared for you.

With these words Augusta left him, her heart beating quick, and painfully affected by this effort to conceal the unhappiness his conduct occasioned her, but she hoped that this exertion of spirit would bring him to his senses, and convince him that he must not expect her to indulge all his caprices.

Having sent word to the housekeeper that Mr. Villeroy would dine at home, she joined her mother and Mr. Temple:

To their enquiries for Clarence, she replied, that he was not inclined to go out, nor would he permit her to remain with him.

They had already seen enough of his temper to be pretty certain that some whim had determined him to stay at home, and they were glad that Augusta had not encouraged his humour, by persisting in continuing with him.

But Augusta's heart was heavy, and never had society been so irksome to her; all her thoughts were with Clarence, and she was all anxiety to know what effect her behaviour would have upon him.

One moment she regretted having left him, and the next rejoiced that she had exerted some degree of spirit, yet was miserable lest his susceptible feelings should be too keenly affected.

Her imagination was entirely abstracted from the present scene, and so absent was she, that she was obliged to plead a trifling indisposition as an excuse for her unusual demeanour.

When the ladies retired after dinner, she sat lost in her uneasy cogitations.

The idea suddenly and most forcibly struck her, that all Clarence's inconsistency and caprice arose from the excess of his affection for her; and that instead of punishing him for it, she ought rather to love him the more tenderly, that her behaviour on this day could not fail to occasion him the most acute pain, in

as much, as he would interpret it into a diminution of her regard.

It was impossible to say what effect such a persuasion might have upon his sensitive nature! Augusta would at this moment have given worlds that she had not left him! and after a short demur she resolved on immediately going home, for the apprehensions that assailed her were insupportable.

Her whole desire now was to restore tranquillity to her husband's breast, and whispering her mother that she was miserable lest Clarence should be seriously offended with her, Mrs. Temple (on the plea of her daughter's not being very well) advised her to return home, and the carriage was ordered to re-conduct her; it was to return again for Mr. and Mrs. Temple, the distance being little more than three miles.

But Augusta could more readily have believed it to have been twelve as she re-passed it, so impatient was she to reach home.

CHAP. XXVI.



"The sun is set; the clouds are met,

"The lowering scowl of Heaven,

"An inky hue, of livid dew,

"To the dark lake has given.

"Strange gusts of wind from mountain glen,

"Swept o'er the lake, then sunk agen."

WALTER SCOT,

ON alighting from the carriage, Augusta instantly inquired for Mr. Villeroy, and was informed that he had gone out shortly after she had left him, and had not returned since.

Had he not dined at home? No, dinner was still waiting for him. Did he go out on horseback, or on foot? He had walked out into the pleasure grounds.

Augusta immediately dispatched several servants in different directions to seek for him, while she herself pursued the path she was told he had taken.

Evening was now closing in, but Augusta would not permit any of the domestics to accompany her, being averse to their witnessing the manner in which Clarence might probably receive her, should she succeed in finding him.

Quick as her trembling limbs would carry her, she hurried along a winding path that conducted to several picturesque spots and romantic retreats, and finally terminated in a small lake.

Lofty trees waved their branches above her head; the wind sighed mournfully among them; whilst the bending to and fro of the slender poplar or youthful larch, threw uncertain shadows across her path, rendered more gloomy by the obscurity

of twilight. The rustling among the underwood, caused by the wild but harmless inhabitants of these shades, who were now seeking the covert that sheltered their repose, made Augusta start, and with a bounding heart, she redoubled her speed. Yet having reached the spot where she thought it probable she might find the object of her search, she could scarcely assume courage to enter.

It was a hermitage; from the door she took a survey of the interior, but it was too obscure for her to perceive if any one was within, without entering.

"Clarence!" cried she, in a tremulous tone, "my dear Clarence, are you there?"

No one answered. She ventured over the threshold.

She could now perceive something dark lying in one corner. She shuddered and paused. What could it be? Surely that could not be Clarence? He never could have thrown himself on the earth in that damp corner? Yet what might he not do, impelled by despair at the thoughts of her neglect.

She advanced a few paces, panting for breath, and again repeated in a scarcely audible voice "Clarence!"

On a nearer view she did not think it resembled a human form, and immediately after discovered it to be a roll of Indian matting, which she recollected had been brought there the day before, to spread at the bottom of the hermitage.

She now with rapidity emerged from this gloomy spot, and pursued her way towards the lake. She passed several

rustic seats but they were all unoccupied.

Her nerves were affected by an awful tremor which increased as she approached the lake, with which a horrible idea connected itself, engendered by the exaggerated terrors that had taken possession of her mind.

The water looked unusually dark ; she could almost have fancied it fathomless.

Slight waves, caused by a strong breeze, undulated on the bosom of it, washing the pendant branches of the trees that skirted the margin ;

“ But where the lake slept dark and still,
“ Dank osiers fringed the swamp and hill.”

Some sea birds, which from the near vicinity to the ocean were frequently

seen here, flew low over the water, skimming its surface with their wings, while from time to time their melancholy and discordant shrieks, could almost have persuaded one they were mourning the untimely fate of some object ingulphed in the dark wave below.

A damp vapour rose from the water, involving every thing around it in a thick mist, and throwing over the scene an almost sepulchral gloom.

Could Augusta in her present temper of mind have admitted an idea independant of that which engrossed her whole soul, she might, with heathenish superstition have fancied herself transported by death into the gloomy regions of Pluto, wandering in all the horrors of restless misery along the dreary banks of Phlegethon.

But her mind was too strongly im-

pregnated with real misery to be susceptible of this fabulous similitude, and she traversed the border of the lake, while a chill damp bedewed her limbs, and her eyes, with anxious horror, were bent on the dark bosom of the flood.

Craggy rocks, and impenetrable underwood skirted great part of the lake, so that she could not proceed far, and there being no possibility of farther pursuit in that direction, she was about to turn to retrace her steps, when something white, floating on the water attracted her eye.

A thrill of horror passed through her veins as it struck her that it bore the appearance of a letter, which she instantly concluded would confirm her agonizing suspicions.

It was at some distance but near the

edge that was skirted by rock ; with almost frantick desperation she climbed over every impediment, till it was within her reach, when she burst into tears on perceiving that it was only a white water lily, so great was the relief she experienced.

She now with renewed hope, (because her worst fears were not confirmed) retraced the way she had come, trusting that on reaching home she should find that some of the servants had been more successful than herself.

She hurried with rapidity from the wretched lake that had excited such torturing sensations.

Had it been possible, her speed would have been increased by the large and heavy drops of rain which she now perceived falling among the branches,

but she was already proceeding as fast as her fatigued frame would permit her, and it was out of her power to expedite her progress.

CHAP. XXVII.



“ And has the vow,
“ Unblest and joyless as it was,
“ Which gave thee to a lord unworthy of thee,
“ Placed thee beyond the reach of kindred ties,
“ The warmth of blood to blood—the sure affection
“ That nature gives to all?”

JOANNA BAILLIE.

THE rain speedily increased to a tremendous shower, and the wind blew with such violence, that Augusta could with difficulty make her way against it; and by the time she reached the hermitage, she was so completely exhausted as to be obliged to repose herself for a few moments.

The thickness of the foliage over her head had pretty well preserved her from getting wet thus far, but the apprehension of catching cold would not have prevented her proceeding under her present anxiety, had not her strength entirely failed.

The only place where she could find a seat was the hermit's couch; she felt for it, and soon succeeded in finding it, when she threw herself upon it with the heavy languor of a person overcome with fatigue; but with a shriek of terror, she bounded from it, for she found that she had thrown herself on some one who had gained possession of it before her.

"Why do you come to disturb me?" cried the voice of Clarence Villeroy.

"O Clarence! is it you?" burst from the trembling Augusta as she again ap-

proached the couch on which he now sat erect.

“ My dear Clarence, you have terrified me to death !” said she, as she seated herself beside him, and the tears sprung from her eyes.

She attempted to take his hand, but he withdrew it.

“ You make me miserable !” she went on, “ There is no sacrifice I would not make to convince you of the sincerity of my regard ; to promote your happiness is the first wish of my heart.”

“ O talk not in this absurd and ridiculous manner !” cried he, with impetuosity, “ You ! who would not give up the trifling gratification of attending a common dinner party for the sake of my company ! You to talk of making sacrifices ! You ! who could neglect and desert your husband ! a man who adored you, and who could only be said to live in your pre-

sence! To leave him in solitude to mourn your cruelty and ingratitude, stung by your unmerited severity, and smarting under the impression that if you ever had loved him, that sentiment no longer existed in your breast."

"O Clarence!" cried Augusta, as soon as he would permit her to speak, "how can you paint my conduct in such unjust colours? It is your felicity alone that I study! Heaven knows I speak the truth! In going to Mrs. Cotterel's, I acted contrary to my inclination, and was so unhappy that as soon as dinner was over I resolved to come home; for I was wretched under the idea of your displeasure. But I really thought if I could have persuaded you to go sometimes into company, we should both be happier; for even when I have relinquished going out at your desire, and have remained at home with you, you have not seemed perfectly satisfied."

“No, because I knew very well you would rather have gone! But that you should ever have treated me in the manner you have this day, I never could have believed! I shall remember it to the last moment of my existence! O Augusta! you were resolved to try how far you could make me suffer.”

Clarence's voice faltered as he pronounced the last words, and Augusta was convinced that he was weeping; she threw herself upon his neck, and sobbed convulsively, while her tears moistened his cheek. He could no longer resist clasping her to his heart, though he still murmured—“You do not love me, Augusta, I am sure you do not.”

“Clarence,” said she, as she returned his fervent pressure, “I have opposed you on this day for the first time, and it shall be the *last*; if you are unhappy, it shall not be my fault; whatever you command, I will cheerfully obey, my only

wish is to convince you of the steadiness of my regard."

"Ah! dearest Augusta, it is in your power to convince me!" cried Clarence, now completely softened.

"Speak," said Augusta, "only tell me what you require of me."

"Let me take thee, my beloved, to some sequestered spot embosomed in the mountains of Wales, there we will seek a cottage; you shall be my universe! and I will be all the world to you! O! I feel that in such a situation alone I can know peace."

"Then shall *I* be happy!" cried Augusta, in cheerful accents.

"And will you indeed leave your mother, all your relations, and every body for me!" exclaimed Clarence in vehement delight.

"I will Clarence, without hesitation."

"And not even take Pommette with us?"

"No, not even Pommette!"

Clarence was now in an ecstasy of rapture, and before she left the hermitage Augusta had the pleasure of hearing him say, "He *believed* she *did* love him!"

By the end of a week they were settled in a small cottage at the foot of Snowdon, where Clarence fully expected his selfish dream of felicity would be verified.

CHAP. XXVIII.



" Britain farewell ! I quit thy shore ;
" My native country charms no more ;
" No guide to mark the tedious road,
" No destin'd clime ! no fix'd abode !

MRS. ROBINSON.

COLONEL VILLEROY and Mr. Clifford reached Dover just an hour before the packet which was about to sail for Calais, got under weigh, and with difficulty they procured accommodation; as several cabin passengers had already secured births, which were necessary, for as they embarked in the evening, and the wind was not quite fair, it was probable they would be detained on board all night.

Our friends took the precaution, so rarely omitted by Englishmen, of providing themselves with a basket of provisions, and a bottle of wine.

They were neither of them attended by a man servant.

Mr. Clifford's had objected to going abroad, on which account he had parted with him, and Colonel Villeroy's man, who had been many years in his service, had been seized with an indisposition which had prevented his accompanying his master on this journey.

The gentlemen, therefore, determined to trust to chance for providing them with attendants.

Villeroy was by means sorry to avoid the additional expence a man servant occasions on a journey; and Charles could not murmur at an inconvenience with

which his friend put up so cheerfully.

The change of scene and bustle which surrounded him, could not fail to dissipate in some measure Clifford's heavy gloom; and with pleasure he stepped on board the vessel that was to convey him from his native land.

Most of the passengers had gone below, in order to be out of the way while the packet was setting sail, and Villeroy and Charles, desirous of seeing who were to be their companions, descended to the cabin, which was very neatly fitted up, and contained eight births; four on either side.

The persons who were to occupy it were now assembled; they consisted of three females and five males.

To begin by seniority of age, the first

female was a decently dressed woman, bearing the appearance of a respectable housekeeper, and no way remarkable, but for her enormous rotundity, which was equal to that of any three moderate sized persons put together.

The second female was probably not many years junior to the first, at least, so one might have inferred from the wrinkles on her brow, but had one formed an opinion from her dress, one might have been led to imagine she had not yet taken leave of her teens.

Her habiliments were as little appropriate to the place she was in, as they were to her age; light flaxen ringlets dangled on each cheek, the forehead was bare, and on her head was perched a small pink bonnet, from which a white feather, tipped with pink, was pendant, nearly concealing one eye. A pink sarsnet pelisse hung open over a thin muslin gown,

displaying a large gold watch and chain, and a glaring broach. Silk stockings and thin kid shoes completed the lady's *travelling* dress.

The third female, whom the gentlemen concluded to be the daughter of the *modern antique*, was attired in a similar manner, excepting that her colour was blue, and she wore a veil.

Had her companion followed her example in this respect, she would have done wisely; as her painted cheeks would have appeared to advantage through the friendly shade, and the depredations of time would have been less perceptible.

The males consisted of a lean diminutive French Abbé, an Irish ensign, and a buck dressed in the extreme of the fashion, who talked boldly of his horses and carriages, his prowess on the turf, and his determination of making the

grand tour, as soon as he should have provided himself with a convenient number of attendants at Paris, for he had resolved not to suffer a single Englishman in his train, for which reason he had submitted to the inconvenience of travelling without a servant.

This *dasher* was a *man-milliner*, who kept a *cheap* shop in Oxford Street, and was now going to Paris for fashions and bargains.

It was not long ere our friends discovered that he was a person of some such *calling*, but to those who were less conversant with real gentility and elegance, his bombast recommended him extremely, and they concluded they were certainly in company with the son of a nobleman, if not with a nobleman himself.

Villeroy and Charles made up the

eight persons who were to occupy the cabin.

The man milliner continued to hold forth till the ladies, finding that the vessel had set sail, expressed a wish to go on deck.

The Irish ensign instantly sprang forward to present his hand to the young lady; the man milliner conducted her *mature* companion; and the Abbe gave the *bras* to the lusty old gentlewoman, who was glad of any body's assistance.

The Abbe staggered as the *delicate* object of his care pulled herself up the steps by his arm, and had not Charles, who was behind her, given her a seasonable push, they would both have come tumbling back, and in all probability the poor Abbe would have been crushed to atoms by his ponderous charge, and

Charles himself have narrowly escaped *pulverization*.

On deck Villeroy had an opportunity of taking a better view of the young lady than he had had in the cabin, and he was almost convinced that it was Cordelia Lethbridge.

She was conversing familiarly with the Irish ensign. Villeroy approached nearer to her, and was certified that it was indeed her.

He doubted not she must have recognized him the moment she had beheld him, but as she had not taken any steps to make herself know to him, he resolved to behave as if he were unconscious of ever having seen her before, for which her being veiled would be a sufficient excuse.

She appeared to be extremely enter-

tained by the witticisms of the Irish ensign ; and the Colonel had not the least desire to attract her attention from him.

Happening to be near the person under whose protection Cordelia seemed to be, Villeroy heard her say to the man milliner, whom she wished to impress with a high idea of her own consequence, imagining him to be a man of rank and fashion—

“ That young lady, Sir, my protégé, I call her, she, Sir, is Miss Lethbridge, an heiress, I assure you. Her father, a man of great consequence, and immense fortune, my most particular friend, requested me, as a *great* favour, to take charge of her. She is going to board in a French family at St. Omer, in order to finish her education, and learn the language. Perhaps I may go on to Paris, and pay a visit to my friends there, my

Lord Whitworth the ambassador, and several persons of distinction with whom I am *intimately* connected."

"Should that be the case, ma'am," returned the man milliner, "I shall very probably have the honour of meeting you there. I shall be in the first circles; for the first consul* sent me a *private* invitation to take up my residence at his palace. I have also instructions from the British Court to consult with the ambassador on any urgent occasion, and assist him with *my* advice."

Villeroy and Clifford, though not much inclined to the merry mood, could scarcely resist indulging a hearty laugh at this mutual display of absurd pomposity.

Villeroy suspected that Mr. Lethbridge had a stronger motive for sending his daughter abroad than that of

* Buonaparte was not then Emperor.

finishing her education, and his suspicion was just.

The first thing which opened the father's eyes, was Cordelia's behaviour towards Clarence Villeroy.

While she kept up a private correspondence with him, she remained pretty quiet, but on his returning her letters with the lines which convinced her that both he and his brother were aware of her folly, and despised her, she was extremely wrath; but soon forgot her resentment in a new interest.

Without any view but that of amusement, she succeeded in attracting the attentions of a young man who resided in the neighbourhood, and whom she often met at church.

He was not dull of comprehension, and satisfied her by appearing amazingly

struck with her, and throwing himself in her way on all occasions, and these occasions she contrived should be frequent.

An epistolary intercourse was again commenced through the medium of the *femme de chambre*, who in the hope of a large reward betrayed the secret to Mr. Lethbridge.

He was furious, and resolved to shew no mercy to one who could so offend a second time ; and after a short deliberation he determined on sending her abroad, hoping that a temporary exile from her country, and banishment from his presence, would make a deep impression on her mind, and prevent a recurrence of the conduct which had occasioned her disgrace.

He had had it in his power to be extremely kind and useful to a French

family during their emigration, who were now returned to France, and settled at St. Omer, and with them he doubted not he could find a temporary asylum for his daughter.

They were people advanced in years, of a serious and retired turn; and he rejoiced on receiving an answer to a letter he had addressed to them on the subject, to find that they were willing to accommodate *Mademoiselle*.

But Mr. Lethbridge could not so far overcome his attachment to quiet and seclusion as to resolve on accompanying his daughter on the journey, and he applied to the mistress of the school where she had been educated, to recommend to him a steady, respectable, elderly female, to travel with Cordelia.

The school mistress proposed her sister, on whom, she assured Mr. Leth-

bridge, he might implicitly rely; and promised that she herself would fetch Miss Lethbridge to her own house, from whence she might set out with her sister.

The parent was very well pleased with this arrangement; he felt confident that he was resigning his daughter into safe hands, and was glad to relinquish so important a charge.

It has before been observed that Mr. Lethbridge was not a man of the world, and was little conversant with human nature; had not that been the case, he would not probably have applied to the mistress of a seminary where his daughter had imbibed such pernicious principles, to recommend to him a proper person to take charge of her.

He considered it a thing of course, that any one at the head of a school must

be *prudent* and *wise*, and imputed his daughter's improprieties to her own thoughtless levity, and folly. He never even saw this sister, with whom Cordelia set off in high spirits from the school.

She had long known her companion, who had been accustomed to act as one of the governesses ; she was certain she would be no check upon her, and flattered herself she should have as much liberty as a boarder in a french family, as she had enjoyed while at school.

Her companion was equally delighted with the thoughts of the excursion, from which she expected to derive much amusement, while she was amply recompensed by Mr. Lethbridge for the trouble, he thought, he was giving her.

Cordelia had recognized her cousin

the moment he had entered the cabin, but feeling extremely foolish at the idea of being known by him, she determined, while it was possible, to affect not to see him.

She found the Irish ensign very entertaining, and to him she looked for amusement, till she should have reached the other side of the water.

The wind blew fresh, and the ladies were soon glad to return to the cabin to avoid being wet thorough by the spray of the sea.

Miss Pringle's feather already began to look like the wing of a sick chicken, and her pelisse bore evident marks of Neptune's disrespect.

The Abbe took care not to offer his services to the lusty gentlewoman in her

descent, and Charles out of compassion supplied his place.

The party being again arranged in the cabin, various prog baskets were opened, and supper was commenced with great avidity; each, however, keeping to their own, which no one seemed inclined to share with the others.

They were so fully employed, that neither Villeroy or Charles for some time observed that the Abbe was the only idle person; when Charles whispered his friend—

“The poor little Abbe seems to have nothing to do! Perhaps he has neglected to provide himself with provisions, shall we offer him some of ours?”

“O, certainly by all means.”

We before said Charles was a very bad Frenchman—

“*Monsieur l'Abbe!*” cried he, “*vous n'avez pas mangé nous serous bien aise que vous partir.*”

The poor Abbe bowed with the most humble look, begged pardon, and said he would go on deck till they had finished their meal.

“No, no,” cried Charles, stopping him, “*mangé avec nous, mangé avec nous, je veux dire.*”

Villeroy now explained to the Abbe that his friend meant to ask him to partake of their supper, but in mistake had said *partir* instead of *partager*, which indeed would not have been strictly correct, but he was ignorant of the proper application of the verb.

The Abbe made a thousand apologies for his own stupidity in not comprehending what it was impossible he could interpret otherwise than he had done, to which he added *mille graces* for their politeness, protested he never ate supper, and though he should be charmed to join the gentleman's party, he must beg to be excused partaking of any thing.

Nevertheless, he made no very violent objections to the leg and wing of a fowl, and some slices of ham being put before him; and on Villeroy's observing it was only to amuse himself with while they were eating, he commenced his attack upon them, as he said—" *Eh bien!* for the amusement!"

Had the wing still retained its volatile powers, it could not have *disappeared* with much greater velocity; and never could the leg, even in its most vigorous days, have proceeded with greater rapid-

dity than it now hastened to follow the wing down the throat of the voracious Abbe.

His plate continued to be amply replenished, while his protestations of abstinence were redoubled, though his devouring faculties seemed no way impaired or fatigued, and this *amusement* he pursued till the basket of provisions was pretty well thinned, when he protested that merely because he would not appear *ingrate* he had eaten till he was absolutely "*rembourrez comme un canon*;" an expression very common even in the first circles of French society, however, vulgar and coarse we should esteem it if literally translated.

I shall offer no apology for the sentences and quotations in French which I have already introduced, or may insert in the course of this work, without annexing any translation, as I have most respectable

precedents for concluding *that* to be superfluous, viz. the Edinburgh reviewers.

“Who (say they) ever heard a lady boast that she understood French? for no other reason that we know of, but because every body in these days does understand French; and though there may be some disgrace in being ignorant of the language, there is little or no merit in its acquisition.”

After this it would be an affront to my readers to offer a translation of what I cannot possibly suppose them to be ignorant of; such an offence would be unpardonable, and I would not willingly incur their *just* displeasure.

Having finished his early supper; Villeroy went on deck, and, lost in melancholy musing, he watched the receding land nearly obscured in the deepening twilight, which left it nothing but the appearance of a dark and heavy cloud.

Charles felt every disposition to a relapse of those horrors which he had lately been a prey to, and in hopes of dissipating in some measure, this desponding sensation, he determined to continue in the cabin, and endeavour to attend to, if he could not join in, the conversation that was going on there.

Cordelia and her beau had seated themselves on one of the seats at the fire place, and Miss Pringle and the man milliner occupied the other. The Abbe, Charles, and the fat lady, were left to entertain each other.

The fat lady was taciturn; the Abbe the reverse, but his volubility was not of such a cast as could excite Charles to an animated reply, and he answered in monosyllables. Meantime, he could not avoid making some observation on the reciprocal demeanour of the parties who appeared so amiable. But their good under-

standing was destined to be shortly interrupted. Cordelia soon found that the Irish ensign was not to be kept at the distance which *even she* thought prudent; and her desire to repel him was increased by her having overheard part of the conversation passing between her dear friend and the man milliner, from which she was led to believe that the latter was a person of great consequence, and she began to suspect that her *dear* friend had secured the best beau for herself, and speedily determined that she should not long enjoy this triumph; she suddenly arose, exclaiming that she had something to say to Miss Pringle. There was considerable motion in the vessel, and Cordelia immediately lost her footing, and came flying very *apropos* into the arms of the man milliner.

Miss Pringle, alarmed, started up, when Cordelia slid into her place, while she appeared half fainting, and for a

few moments rested on her supporter. Miss Pringle was necessitated to take the vacant place next the ensign, whose brow immediately became clouded. The man milliner who had long envied the ensign the superior advantage of engrossing the attention of the junior lady, resolved not to neglect the happy opportunity he now had, of recommending himself to her. Cordelia was soon quite herself again, and found her near neighbour fully prepared to meet her wishes; while the ire she saw mounting in the ensign's indignant looks, and the restless demeanour of her *dear* friend increased her satisfaction.

Miss Pringle wished to appear unconcerned, and attempted to converse with the ensign; he answered her rudely; she became irritated, and gave vent to her spleen in sarcastic allusions. The ensign now said with the distinguishing accent of his country—

“These seats are very agreeable when one has a pleasant companion! Ma’am, I’ll trouble you not to be elbowing me so! By the powers! I shall be black and blue!”

“Lord, Sir, I am sure I don’t wish to be near you. I would much rather be any where else.”

As she said this, Miss Pringle elevated her eye brows, turned up her nose, and recoiled from her proximity to the ensign, as if he had been some venomous reptile. He returned—

“Well then, you had better be after giving the young lady her seat again, as we don’t seem likely to agree.”

“The lady choose to take my seat not very politely either, I think. However, she shall give it me again. Miss Lethbridge, madam, I will trouble you to give me my seat again!”

“O!” cried the man milliner, “I can-

not permit this lady to move after the narrow escape she had of falling just now."

"Then you shall come out of that place yourself," cried the ensign, "for this beautiful *young* creature here can't do without you, and I cannot say I am anxious to continue her neighbour."

With these words, "thirsting for revenge," the ensign arose, and with one heel of the vessel was precipitated head foremost into the lap of the lusty gentlewoman, who loudly vociferated that she was killed.

The Hibernian's misfortune excited a burst of laughter, which even the lady's protestation could not smother. The discomfited hero endeavoured to regain his feet, swearing he would pull the fellow from his seat by the nose. The man milliner was about to retort, when he was prevented by observing a sudden and violent convulsion in the features of

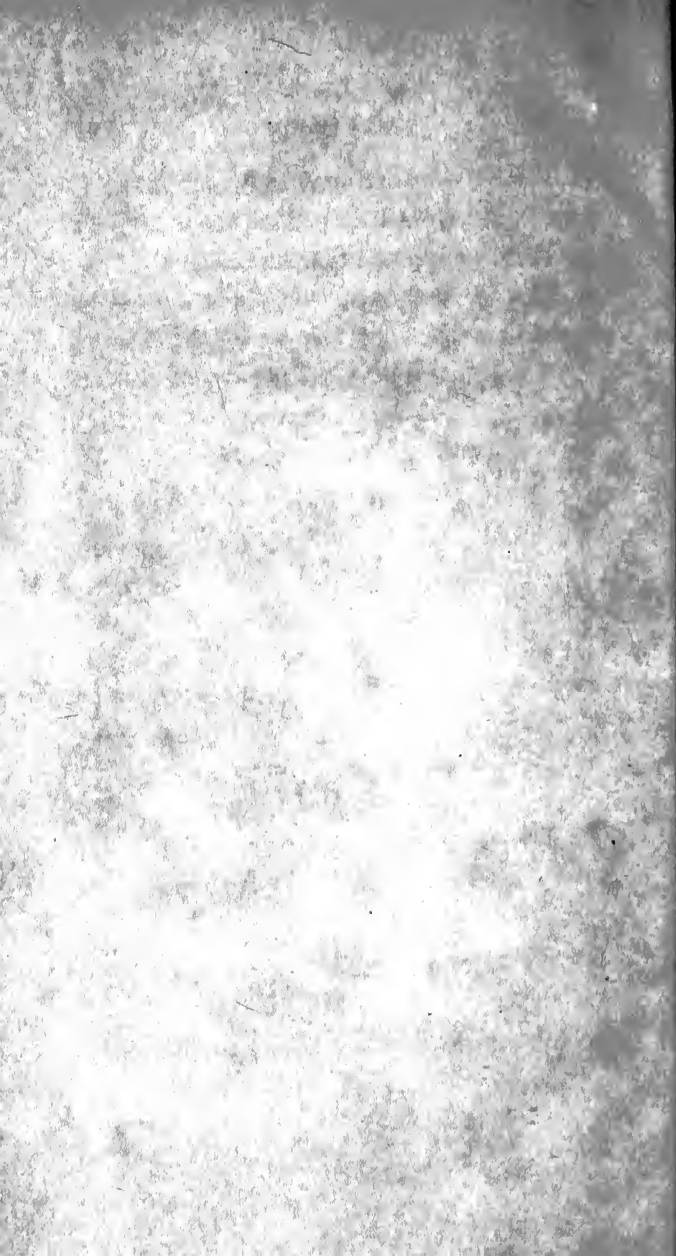
the fair Helen who had occasioned this direful contention. This extraordinary agitation, like that of the seers of old, was immediately succeeded by an irrepressible burst,—a spontaneous flow, (the reader will of course conclude) of sublime effusions. I cannot possibly be so rude as to contradict him. Certain it is, it was a species of *oratory* that strongly affected Clifford's nerves; this probably arose from its being the language of nature, which is ever most impressive.

He hastened to leave the cabin, and his flight was expedited by his perceiving that the other females gave evident signs of an inclination to become as *eloquent* as Cordelia, whom the Irish ensign was endeavouring to comfort, saying,—

“Never mind, my dear creature, never mind now, I'll be after fetching you an *elegant* bucket in a moment.”

However, Charles prevailed on him and the other men, to quit the cabin, and give the ladies an opportunity of retiring to their births, where in repose they might lose the sense of the oppressive sickness which at present overcame them.

END OF VOL. I.







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